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EWALD'S PROPHEETS  
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.  
VOL. I.



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,

BY THE LATE

DR. GEORG HEINRICH AUGUST VON EWALD,

*Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Göttingen.*

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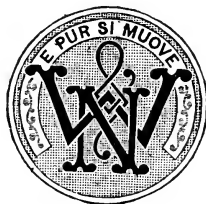
Translated by

J. FREDERICK SMITH.

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VOL. I.

YÔËL, 'AMÔS, HOSEÀ, AND "ZAKHARYA," CH. IX.-XI.



WILLIAMS AND NORGATE,

14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON ;

AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.

1875.



# COMMENTARY

ON THE BOOKS OF

JOËL, 'AMÔS, HOSEA, AND "ZAKHARYA," (CH. IX.-XI.)

WITH TRANSLATION

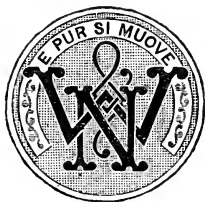
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## P R E F A C E.

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THE translation of the late Professor Ewald's great work on the Hebrew Prophets, the first instalment of which is here presented to the English reader, is intended to be a translation and not an adaptation. Accurate translation was what the Committee of the Theological Translation Fund required, and that alone has been the study of the translator. The author wrote his work for earnest students in search of the meaning of the Hebrew Prophets, and his translator has worked under the conviction that only such will study this English version. Certainly, readers of the original who care more for form than for truth and meaning are not likely to become students of the great Göttingen critic ; but it was not for them that he published the results of his profound enquiries. It is as little likely that English readers who expect to discover the meaning of a page of English at the first glance will read through this first volume of one of this confessedly difficult author's most original and characteristic works. On the other hand, it is hoped that the English reader who resolves to master this important book in the English translation has not undertaken a much harder task than the German reader of the original. At least, it has been the aim of the translator to render English students this service. To make their labour lighter than this was not his wish. If an accurate and intelligible translation has been produced, his design has been accomplished.

A few words with reference to the translation of Ewald's German version of the Hebrew text will probably not be out of place. It was not his design to make a popular rendering of these ancient writers. If he had been preparing an "authorised

version," he would have made greater concessions to the eye, ear, and grammatical feeling of modern German readers. His object was to present as accurate and forcible a representation of the orations and writings of the Hebrew Prophets as the German language would permit. He did not shrink from laying a heavy strain upon the language, if he could thereby make it bring out some peculiarity of the original Hebrew. What are vulgarly called grammatical inaccuracies he copied from the Hebrew into his German, wherever they were transferrable. He also entirely broke through the ordinary rules which prescribe the position of words in the sentence. In both respects he followed the Hebrew as closely as possible. This translation does the same: save that, owing to the want of case-endings and other grammatical helps, the English language does not permit an equal freedom with the German as regards the order and position of words.

In obedience to the same principle of presenting as close a representation of the Hebrew as was possible, Ewald abandoned the ordinary German orthography of Hebrew proper names and gave them to his German reader in their original form. The only exception he made to this rule was the few names which have been made current in their Greek form, *e. g.* *Messias, Jerusalem*. In the English translation no departure has been made from the original in this respect. The only change is the substitution of the letter *y* for the German *j*, and in the word *Yahvé* the addition of a dash to the final *e* to indicate that it is vocal. In quotation, however, the retention of the common English orthography was thought less likely to confuse.

The pointing of the translation of the Prophets will be seen to be peculiar. This also is an attempt to reproduce the chief stops of the Hebrew text. The smaller Hebrew stops are left out, and, to avoid confusion, the ordinary German and English points are omitted.

The constant references to the author's Hebrew Grammar by the simple number of the paragraph, *e.g.* §. 300 *a*, will apply not only to the various editions of the *Ausführliches Lehrbuch der Hebräischen Sprache des Alten Bundes*, but also to the *Hebräische Sprachlehre für Anfänger*, both in the original and the translation by the translator of this work (*Ewald's Introductory Hebrew Grammar, translated from the Third German Edition by J. Frederick Smith*, London, Asher & Co., 1870). The references to the author's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* are in the case of the three first volumes to the English translation by Professors Martineau and Carpenter, but the pages within brackets are those of the original. References to the subsequent volumes are to the German work. In the case of the *Alterthümer des Volkes Israel*, the pages of the second edition of the original have been added within brackets, as the Rev. H. S. Solly, who has announced an English translation of this work, has kindly informed the translator that he intends to give the paging of this edition of the original in the margin of his translation.

Owing to the death of the author, the translation has not had the advantage of his revision, which he had promised. In the summer of last year the translator was allowed the painful privilege of talking over with the author a few of the passages of the present volume about the meaning of which he was in doubt. Age had not bent that erect form; nearly half a century's toil over oriental type and manuscripts had not dimmed those eyes, which had never asked for any artificial aid; but, alas, a "Herzleiden" held him within its fatal grip. Perhaps some day his fellow countrymen may be inclined to think a little about that suffering at the heart of one of their most disinterested patriots!

J. FREDERICK SMITH.

November, 1875.

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ON THE  
PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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INTRODUCTION.\*

I.

THE PROPHET'S CHARACTERISTICS AND WORK.

A full description of the vocation and work of the prophets belongs more properly to a treatment of the nature of the ancient religion of Israel in general, which cannot be conceived apart from the agency of the prophets. Many things in reference to the nature, history, and end of the religion and the kingdom of Israel, the reasons for which are elsewhere given, must here be assumed without detailed treatment.

Nor does it lie within the compass of this work, to elucidate all the scattered narratives of the Old Testament referring to the prophets, which occur especially in the historical books. Without doubt every narrative of a prophet's deeds, when

\* I am disposed to leave this introduction to the entire work essentially unaltered, since it has a certain historical import, has been translated into English,† and can maintain its own truthfulness. Nevertheless, I hope soon in another place to deal with the whole subject afresh with much greater fulness and particularity. In this republication of the introduction, however, many points have been more correctly presented, and many important additions have been made.

† The translation into English of this introduction which Dr. Ewald refers to is to be found in Kitto's *Journal of Sacred Literature*, January, 1853, by E. S. It embraces the first two only of the three parts of the introduction, and is fairly but not quite accurately done. The new treatment of the subject which Dr. Ewald promises has since appeared in the first volume of his work, *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott oder Theologie des Alten und Neuen Bundes*, Leipzig, 1871.

we once get at its original meaning, supplies its contribution to the correct understanding of the nature of the ancient prophets in general, however far the narrative has travelled through legendary territory. Accordingly the various widely scattered narratives and legends of the prophets have here not been left unnoticed. Still this work has to elucidate not the historical but the purely prophetic literature. The full interpretation of those legends, and the proof of how much genuine history has been preserved in them, belong partly to an exposition of the historical books of the Old Testament, and partly to the general history of the nation.

But in our day it is infinitely better to commence a study of the prophets with what they themselves have written rather than with the meagre narratives and scattered legends of their deeds and words. In their own writings they have most distinctly and trustworthily laid bare their spirit. Whoever desires to know in their inmost hearts these heroes of divine truth and to admire their genuine greatness, should learn first to understand their words and actions as they themselves have recorded them. It is here that they approach us most closely and confidently, inviting us most irresistibly to make ourselves acquainted with them. When we have first correctly comprehended whatever in them is not very foreign from our modes of thought, we can with greater certainty understand the reminiscences of detached prominent or striking words and deeds of the ancient prophets, which have been preserved by other and often very late authors.

We here supply, therefore, a few general principles, which will be more completely established in the treatment of the individual prophets in the course of the work, and which will also serve at the same time to set many particulars in their true light.

## 1. THE PROPHET IN GENERAL.

1. The general truths which rule the world, or (in other words) the thoughts of God, possess an eternal, unchangeable, and inviolable existence, absolutely independent of the mutation of lower things, as well as of the volition and actions of men. But man was not originally created and destined to continue a stranger to them. However meagre, and in some individuals however weakened, there is in man a natural capacity and power of apprehending these truths and of converting them by his thought into volition and at length into action, that thus, entering into them with conscious effort, he may also think, resolve, and work with God, and thereby attain the true end of his being. The spirit (*i.e.* active divine life) whose original seat is in God alone, was planted in man, at least as a germ, by his creation : and be it observed, as a germ which is of itself dead, like every other germ, without its appropriate soil. It is in accordance with this twofold truth that in the Bible it is so often said, that God calls and incites men, arouses and urges them, to share in his life, purpose and activity, to know and to follow him. But just as this call appeals irresistibly and from all time to all, so also it precedes all prophetic action and life as its distant possibility and condition ; a truth which the narratives in the introductions to prophetic writings teach amongst other things with such force and truth, Isa. ch. vi. ; Jer. ch. i. ; Ezek. ch. i-iii.

This call, which naturally reaches all men, cannot be without some results, some answer and corresponding deed on their part ; this capacity cannot remain for ever without its due exercise. It would be no innate, essential and divine capacity if its end and object remained always beyond its reach, or without a start and tendency towards the attainment of its end. On the contrary, the entire course of the world and the hidden divine activity which is behind it, incite the germ not to lie

dead and inert, and then only would it remain unfruitful if the divine activity were itself to cease. How far this is from being the case our daily experience proves. Every mighty convulsion and movement of the world tends necessarily to convulse that germ also and to draw it forth from the dark earth into the light. For every outward and temporal convulsion wakes the instinct to seek its cause, and as soon as the instinct of examination and observation and reasoning has been aroused in the germ, it acquires constantly new strength and is able to bear its proper blossom and fruit. The above capacity will also without cessation be ever more powerfully and profoundly aroused with the successive developments of history; the above call will sound forth ever more irresistibly; till at last—far as our age may be from it—the capacity will have attained its purpose and the measure will be full which the volition and the activity of mankind have to fill up. It is not in vain that it is so often said in the Old Testament, that Yahvé is no dead but a living God.

If therefore the heart of an individual, which is often so inert and dull, consents to be aroused by the divine thought, which in reality is ever calling and standing ready to draw him to itself, and consents to be urged by it to a corresponding purpose and activity, in that man a new life will be established in which he can no longer feel himself alone and forsaken, but in fellowship with God and all truth, and prepared to advance ever onward from one truth to another. This is essentially another life, a second higher life, in the same man, the individual will feeling itself determined and led by a higher universal will; and the consequent action will be neither isolated nor hampered, as it once was, but will take part in the divine operation itself, producing thus eternal and blessed fruit and reward. Then for the first time exists spirit in man, *i.e.* really active divine life; at least not till then, in the course of the ages, does the work of the spirit commence in man and not till then can it advance securely. And yet this



is no alien and forced life, but only the perfection of the life that was designed for men freely to enjoy ; it is simply the attainment of life as it ought to be.

The sign and proof of the actual formation within any person of a fellowship of this kind, in its pure and original energy, must be supplied not merely by certain truths which germinate and live in him, but in addition by a clear and lucid view of his age and its condition, by wisdom and perfect calmness in the face of the clouds and complications of the present, by firm energetic action in overcoming the hindrances in the way of what is good, and by the subsequent certain victory with its attainment of divine blessings. Whoever feels within himself a light by which he victoriously divides the dark clouds of his time, will not deceive himself with respect to the life of this fellowship within ; whoever authenticates himself thus will sooner or later be recognized by others also as participating in this fellowship.

However, we are here less concerned with this general truth of the kinship of the human and divine spirit than with the great diversities which are possible in man's participation therein. Not only can there exist a difference in men with respect to the duration of this fellowship, inasmuch as many may for a moment dimly feel the flashing light of the fire of a higher life while but few are abidingly enlightened ; differences may also exist with respect to the inward power of this fellowship, since in many it may but half perform its work, whilst in but few it attains an all-subduing force ; or with respect to the activity and potency with which the existing fellowship acts outwardly upon others, it not being granted to all to arouse and attract others to the same fellowship. The character of this fellowship is differently manifested also according to the great differences of historical periods ; and it is precisely this difference that we have here further to examine.

Inasmuch as it is generally possible, as we have seen, that the human spirit should come into the closest fellowship with

the pure divine spirit and catch its meaning, it must also be possible, upon a stage of exalted spiritual energy and inner activity, that the conception received during the sway of divine thought should take such absolute possession of the mind of a man that he should feel it not at all as his own conception, but as purely that of his God. This is not only possible but desirable ; since the divine thoughts and conceptions are in fact potent enough to entirely fill the soul, and, when they alone and purely control it, to control it only for good. Thus ought man to give up his contradictory thoughts for divine ones; and happy is he who is conscious of the higher thoughts only, who can now think and find himself anew in God, to whom God is so present that he believes he hears his word aloud, converses with him as with his bosom friend, and feels with growing clearness the revelations of his mind. As the man who has habituated himself to evil thoughts feels within an oracle that is always urging him to fresh conceptions and resolutions of evil, and seducing him to wicked deeds, Ps. xxxvi. 2, so in the heart of the good man exists the genuine divine Oracle, proclaiming aloud to him the pure universal truths, placing before the eye of his mind corresponding clear conceptions and resolutions, irresistibly urging him to all that is good ; of which the whole Ps. xci. supplies a noble example.

But it is not always merely his own personal affairs that regulate and occupy the thoughts of the man who is a member of a nation and the subject of a kingdom. What he observes of the affairs of other men may also influence and move him, since it will be essentially of the same nature, and ultimately every human concern has something common to all in its origin, operation, and result. If, then, a phenomenon, which refers also or chiefly to others, creates in an individual's mind so vivid and divine a conception that he recognizes it not as his own but as God's conception, its irresistible, intense power will urge him to declare it as such publicly to others ; and with the same immediateness and strength with which it lives in him he

will communicate it in that quarter where it was occasioned and where it appears necessary for the welfare of men. Even the pressure of an ordinary conception which has deeply penetrated his nature will not leave a man in peace until he converts (or endeavours to convert) it into will and deed ; how much more must a divine conception of the kind we are describing, where it has once taken forcible possession of him, leave a man no rest until he proclaims it in that quarter where its truth and power can and ought most effectually to work.

It is precisely this that brings us to what we call *prophecy*. The primary idea of a prophet is not of one who is a prophet to himself, but of one who is a prophet to other men : he has seen or heard something which does not concern himself, or not himself alone, which will not let him rest, for which he must work by his words. He is at first overpowered by a divine truth and conception which he sees as a distinct form, like a *vision*, floating before his spirit. It wholly absorbs him, so that his own personality disappears before it, so that he thinks he sees only the bright divine form of the matter, and hears only the word which is appropriate to it ; he no longer hears and is conscious of himself, but of the loud and clear voice of another who is higher than himself. Perceiving thus the mighty voice of the higher One speaking upon some matter of public import, and that voice alone, so that he is unable any longer to escape from it and its call, he is compelled to proclaim in the right quarter what presses so irresistibly upon his heart, and he finds no rest until this duty has been performed. He has exactly the feeling of having received a special trust, a *mission*, and errand from his God distinctly to declare, in spite of all hindrances, at the right place the higher voice which he cannot any longer hide and suppress within him. He acts and speaks not of his own accord ; a higher One impels him, to resist whom is sin ; it is his God, who is also the God of those to whom he must speak. And those to whom he speaks

often come by his proclamation to feel *their* God as alive within them; they hear what they sought for but did not find; they surmise and recognize in him who declares to them what they had long sought the preacher and interpreter of his own and their God, the mediator between them and God. In this irresistible somewhat that impels both the prophet and his hearers, in the extreme force with which the divine truth and conception springs forth from the one as its active instrument and then works upon the others as passive recipients, lies the genuine prophetic element.

This view of the prophetic nature held by the ancient world is also expressed in the terms by which language names the prophet and his utterances. Confining ourselves for the present to the Hebrew language, its name for a prophet, נָבִיא, denotes originally a *loud, clear speaker*,\* yet always one who declares the mind and words of another who does not himself speak; just as a dumb or a retired person must have a speaker to speak for him and declare his thoughts, so must God, who is dumb with respect to the mass of men, have his messenger or speaker; and hence the word in its sacred sense denotes him who speaks not of himself, but as commissioned by his God; it can further even denote in a humbler sense the person

\* Arabic usage, according to which the root is used quite commonly of communicating reports or messages, clearly attests this sense. It is true the ancient Arabic grammarians could not agree as to the primary meaning of the word, yet it seems certain that nabā, comp. nabah, means popularly that which is *clear*, the forthcoming, the upcoming, and that thence comes the sense to *elucidate, report, speak for another*. The word nabāt, it is true, is explained in the *Scholia* to Harith's M. v. 11, as if it were a *hidden, gentle sound*, in which case the root might be related to نَسَب mentioned below; but in the case of this Arabic word, it is the fem. ending alone that expresses the diminished sound. The stem نَبِئ is formed exactly like kalymon, *speaker* (prop. apt to speak), acc. to § 149 e, as chakim, *wise*, khabir, *experienced*; προφήτης, Sansk. vādi or vādica, Lat. vates, from vad, to speak, therefore completely answers to it. Most like is the denomination of Moses as kalyon allah, *the speaker of God*; and in our own day among the Druses the new word natykon, *speaker, i.e. prophet*, has been formed after this. The word *mouth* (Ex. iv. 16; comp. vii. 1) supplies a good elucidation.

who makes known as his speaker before men the mind of a more exalted holy man (Exod. vii. 1 ; comp. iv. 10-17). Later authors explain this primitive word by the more definite denominations, מְלִיץ, *interpreter* (Isa. xliii. 27), and מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה, *messenger of Yahvé* (Hag. i. 13 ; comp. Judges ii. 1-5 with vi. 8-10). This primitive word is found in all Semitic languages as the oldest and most common designation of a prophet, whilst in Hebrew it has even lost its root and must develop derivatives from itself. Another substitute for it is the name *man of the spirit* (Hos. ix. 7 ; comp. Ezek. ii. 2, sq.) ; a greater distinction but less definite is the name *man of God*, as especially great and earlier prophets are designated by historians (1 Sam. ii. 27 ; ix. 6, sq. ; 1 Kings xiii. ; Jer. xxxv. 4). What the prophet utters is most generally called דְּבַר יְהוָה, *Yahvé's word* ; other words of similar meaning will be explained subsequently. The word נְאֻם, *ne'úm* (a deep sound, note, word, as if coming from the chest), of a very ancient origin, is specially memorable in a historical point of view. It is employed by the earliest prophets whose written productions we have to elucidate in this work, always in close conjunction with the name of the God of Israel, *Yahvé*, and then almost in every case only\* at the end of a sentence in a greater or smaller pause, and most frequently at the end of a greater section, in order at the end once more expressly to designate with great emphasis what has just been said as *Yahvé's word*. Except in Zech. xii. 1, the phrase was used for *introducing* an oracle in still earlier times only.† In the case of this word we can plainly see how easily certain words acquire a degree of sanctity by virtue of the sanctity of the Oracle, and are only used in connections in which the sublimity and divinity of what they are intended to designate comes out as if by magic. Thus this compound term was regarded by the prophets of Israel from David's time and afterwards through many centuries. It is

\* That the passage Jer. ix. 21 hardly forms an exception is observed *in loco*.

† As the passage 2 Sam. xxiii. 1 clearly shows.

certain poets who first begin again to locate it somewhat more freely with the meaning of *Oracle*,\* and Jer. xxix. 31, for a special purpose ventures even to derive a new verb from it. Still we know that this term which had acquired sacredness with the people of Israel was by no means the oldest, and that Moses announced his oracles in quite another way.† This single word, therefore, supplies us with the successive phases of the history of prophecy generally in Israel.

That in this way of prophecy the divine mind can draw nearer to men, and has actually drawn nearer to them, does not admit of the smallest doubt. For whoever has carefully inquired how divine truths, with their application to the confusions of human life, can become a living reality, will see that the way by which this can take place must necessarily lead beyond the confines where human and divine spirit meet, and meeting and mutually rousing each other, kindle the spark both of right thought and pertinent conception as to the pressing questions of life. In fact, it is in this way that in our own day every one must proceed who will attain personal and calm certainty in this region, and will strengthen himself to the point of immovable stability against the world and its confusions. And should there be similar truths and presentiments yet to spring forth (for the application of known truths is easier than the discovery of the truths themselves), they would flow from the source which we have here been made acquainted with as the prophetic source.

The distinctive and unique feature of this prophetic method is simply the violence and immediateness of the prophetic

\* Num. xxiv. 3, sq.; Prov. xxx. 1, it is found at the opening of an oracle before the name of a man who speaks as prophet, as an announcement and introduction of an utterance with a prophetic tone; still freer Ps. xxxvi. 2. But Prov. xxx. 1, it is better to read the verb עָנָה; comp. *Dichter des A.B.'s*. ii. p. 251, second ed. The word must at first have been applied so easily in this peculiar manner on account of its signifying originally a vocal sound, as coming forth from a mysterious deep (comp. *nām* and *nacham*).

† Comp. *Hist. of Israel*, i. 103 (i. 153); ii. 20, 129, 163, sq. (ii. 31, 184, 231, 233, sq. third ed.).

activity, the irresistible impulse from God himself, the pressure and the rapture, bearing upon the soul within and men without. The prophet must speak what his God will, and as He will ; he must do this when and where it is demanded, without regard to any person ; he shrinks as it were into nothing in the presence of his God ; he hardly knows or is conscious of himself any longer. We are quite prepared to grant that this violence and immediateness, when the truth itself is looked at, is scarcely anything more than appearance and form ; for whether what is uttered with such urgency as coming from God himself is true and applicable, must be proved by its inner truthfulness and its operation ; the labour and the garment of thought are not the thought itself. Nevertheless this form is essential to all prophecy ; prophecy even in its greatest and abidingly fruitful productions is not possible without this its natural and spontaneous form. Historically, therefore, this form must have originated in an unavoidable necessity.

We have now arrived at the main principle, that the prophetic form is the earliest in which higher, divine truths and conceptions can start into life, that on that account prophecy belongs peculiarly to early antiquity and the youth of the human race. It was to the people of antiquity that prophecy must come, and precisely in this form. For we must imagine a time when the higher truths themselves had no existence amongst men, or not a sufficiently stable and distinct existence, and when men were still less conversant with the application of them to the confusions of life. That will therefore have been a time when these truths, with their application, had first to find for themselves a course, to procure an existence and a value amongst men. Now, when a truth breaks into light, and will clear for itself a path, it seizes the individual, in whose mind it will break forth, with great strength and violence, as with its whole still undivided, primary, and fresh potency : it comes to the man, not derived, weakened, and in part ; but when it

really comes for the first time, it comes with absolute immediateness and overwhelming force. But when a truth comes thus, God himself comes in and with it, since in this case certainly it is impossible to separate God from the truth. Thus is explained the urgent pressure and impulse within the prophet's heart, the immediate certainty given to him by his God himself, his being filled and possessed by a higher One whom he is unable to withstand. Amongst the masses of men as distinct from the prophet, the exact antithesis of this new enkindling truth with its wonderful power was still prevalent; and the greater and more marked this distinction between the one and the multitude was, so much the more violently and overpoweringly must the new thought force itself upon other men, urging itself upon them as coming directly from God with the same immediateness as that in which it had arisen in the prophet. Where a heart feels this resistless pressure and commotion of a thought, the thought must similarly storm the world without. Here therefore two causes combined to render the utterances of the prophet as extraordinarily and wonderfully intense as his mental labour had been.

The phenomena of prophecy were, therefore, if we review their entire course, the first strong pulsations and wonderful movements of the higher thoughts themselves in their application to human problems and perplexities, the first sparks which like sudden lightnings fell into the darkness of men's purposes; the emotions could not be gentler, the flashes not more slow; what is extraordinary and wonderful about the phenomena is founded in the thing itself, and without this process no truths at all could have awoke among men. Further, there were but very scattered rays which arose here and there; there could be but a few original and genuine prophets, and these few stood quite alone and apart from the mass of men. Yet the latter saw the rays, and could not always avoid seeing that such light was well pleasing to their God also, and enlightened and relieved themselves. Before long a larger or smaller



band must have gathered round a true prophet, who would gladly hear him as speaker and interpreter of the silent God; and thus the foundation would be laid of a varied prophetic work. Inasmuch as the example of the true human-divine life originated first with the few prophets, their nature and character became therefore of such vast importance for whole tribes and nations; and while a genuine prophet became the salvation and blessing of a wide circle, a corrupt prophet contributed greatly to the general profanity and ruin of the country (Jer. xxiii. 9-14). It was always held to be a blessing if the Oracle did not cease, but continued in constant activity (Prov. xxix. 18; Ps. lxxiv. 9); and whoever from his rank and position was bound to devote himself to noble aims and dispositions, from him the earlier ages fondly looked that he should be like a prophet, as the beautiful legends of Saul among the prophets show. The Nazarites (devotees) formed a transition-species between the prophets and the people, they not being speakers, but yet pledged to lead a hallowed life.\*

In our day everything is altogether different. Thanks to the prophets, the divine truths (*i.e.* religious and moral truths, we are not here speaking, at least not directly, of truths of history and physical science) have become universally known and familiar; almost all that remains to be done is to determine their true reference and to see their infinite applications. Preserved by tradition and books, acknowledged by schools and national laws, revered by thousands, the truths in our day confront men as a power that exists without them; and what first glowed as a hidden, but mightily outbreking fire quite within the inmost heart of holy men, has now become a visible light set up in the world without men. This changed condition of things brings its own special danger, which in modern times has long since made itself largely felt. For inasmuch as those truths have taken up their position as an external power between God and men, and since to these few

\* Comp. *Alterthümer des Volkes Israel*, p. 113, sq. third ed.

simple universal truths have been further added a large mass of derived, mixed truths, mere ideas and usages, which have become sacred and legal, it is not strange that it should become very difficult to rise to the living source of pure truth—God himself, and to find the way to the true end, through the existing confused mass of received opinions. Nevertheless, in comparison with this not infrequently attending drawback, the advantage is much greater and more enduring. The tried and approved fruits of prophetic labour, the resulting truths, are now, whether more or less clearly comprehended, known and established over a wide surface, and are of themselves performing a work of infinite extent. Any person, even one of the multitude, can without any exertion of the old prophetic violence of origination, recognise and apply them; and the first most necessary basis for this may be assumed as existing in every people. Hence in our day prophecy has been developed into pure dogmatic instruction, which considers the truths with greater calmness now they have been once received, compares them with each other, estimates and arranges them; the object of which being in the case of hearers and scholars, to see that the long-established truths become to them as clear and certain as is desirable. Violence and immediateness cease, because their purpose has been attained and their day is past. With respect to the truth itself and its necessity for mankind, this makes no difference; we must see the truth just as clearly and immediately in God, and maintain its application with equal firmness against the whole world; but we must not wait until it becomes manifest either to us or another with immediate violent force; for us it is already externally existing.

2. Prophecy has therefore by its very nature its proper season and its perfection. In general it is a phenomenon the necessity and justification of which must be sought in the early ages of the world. It will originally have existed among all nations, and we are familiar enough with the fact, that the most ancient reminiscences and legends of all ancient peoples

tell of such speakers and messengers from their divinities, and also how wonderful was the zeal with which often great tribes and nations listened to the inspired and tried words of a prophet. The Bible everywhere expressly allows that the heathen deities also might have their prophets.

But it is equally certain that prophecy may easily degenerate and wander from its true end. History records how easily and generally this occurred in various ways among ancient nations ; and a closer examination of the nature of prophecy shows how this could be. If prophecy in its external features, its urgency and storminess, its violence and constant appeal to immediate, divine certainty, were truth or religion itself, we could not then understand the possibility of its degeneracy ; but since we saw that all this belongs only to the temporal form of prophecy, we are already in a position to understand at once this possibility, just as easily as we know that religion and law, church and state, in the form in which they arise and are established in various times and places, may very greatly degenerate, without justifying on that account the rejection or a contempt of the true spirit and aims of these high human treasures.

Coming to particulars, we find that there may be several occasions and species of such degeneracy :

*a.* A very natural and at first scarcely observed occasion of degeneracy lies in the violent character of the phenomenon of prophecy itself. The prophet as such is carried away by the divine truth and conception which has taken possession of him : he is carried away by it from the first moment when it seizes and convulses him, fills and oppresses him ; he continues to be carried away by it when he advances to execute it, when the thought and word of his God forces its way into the world ; the inspired condition is one that extraordinarily excites his whole nature, straining every power to its highest pitch, enabling and obliging him to speak and execute the miraculous. But this state of extremest tension and excitement,

during which the profoundest powers of the man are enticed from their abysses, and the most unlooked for flashes of the spirit may shoot forth, is yet a very dangerous one, since the violence of the impulse is not always met by a counterbalancing power of lucid and fitting execution ; and if in this ill-adjusted relation the prophet cannot moderate his feelings, over-tension is the result, and clear self-consciousness together with sobriety of mind often flees before the violent storm within, so that in such a moment the inspired person, led astray by overpowering or confused thoughts, says and does what he would not do in his conscious moments. Hence *madness*, frenzy is the dark side of prophecy, whenever this fine boundary line is passed ; whether it be that the true prophet, who generally can well control himself, and values highly calm self-possession, at some moment falls into it because he is too greatly irritated and excited by the contradictory spirit of the world (Hos. ix. 8), or whether he be naturally too weak to maintain full self-possession in the exalted moment. Often an able prophet even sank into violent convulsions at the instant when a new thought surprised him, as we see indicated (1 Sam. xix. 24 ; Num. xxiv. 4, 10), and it may well occur that the strange signs of excitement and entrancement should chiefly strike the attention of the hearer, so that he should be unable to disassociate his idea of a prophet from that of semi-madness. Thus in common language the idea of madness and wild enthusiasm becomes associated with the conception of a prophet. מְשֻׁנָּע, *a mad-man*, is a prophet who can find no rest (2 Kings ix. 11 ; Jer. xxix. 26 ; comp. the true explanation, Deut. xxviii. 34). Even in the case of the common designation נָבִיא, which as we saw above originally bore not the slightest trace of a meaning of this sort, its derived reflexive verbs, הִתְנַבֵּא and נָבֵא, “to show oneself as a prophet,” acquire here and there the bad secondary sense of becoming insane and mad (1 Sam. xviii. 10 ; Jer. xxix. 26).\*

\* It is not the same thing when the word is used like the Germ. *phantasiren*,

violent ecstasy, be it pure or impure, might affect those who witnessed it, throwing them into similar convulsions, especially when the phenomenon was still new or rare (1 Sam. x. 4, sq.; 11, 13; xix. 20-24).

It is due to this aberration, to which prophecy by its nature was so greatly exposed, that in many ancient nations it departed from its true aim so very early, and also greatly sank in the estimation of men. But that the aberration is everywhere a necessity, cannot be maintained. The prophet is able to keep within the nice limits allowed him, and it is demanded of him that he shall maintain moderation and perfect self-control, a demand indeed which is made of all men, only of him more imperatively than of others. And only then will prophecy attain perfection and approach its true destination, when the prophet does not lose his self-consciousness in the midst of the most extreme excitement and inspiration. The preceding rapture and inspiration is then only the holy but hidden fire, which is kindled involuntarily and suddenly, and which sends forth light and warmth until its purpose is accomplished. The succeeding execution, on the other hand, in word and deed, while it is fully enlightened and warmed by the inward fire, not suffering itself to be weakened or dimmed by inimical external influences, still everywhere acknowledges and reveres that divine moderation which suffers the individual in no conceivable state to resign his self-consciousness and with it the possibility of wise and beneficial co-operation with God.

b. Should the prophet refer to his God as urging and compelling him to speak, subsequently the result may bear witness for him, apart from the assent with which his hearers may sometimes at once greet his deliverances. But at first he can have no other witness than himself, and must feel in his own heart whether his God really and irresistibly moves him or not. Here therefore *self-deception* is very easy; and many a man

of great musicians, who first receive their melodies in a kind of ecstasy, and repeat them frequently in ecstatic performance (1 Chr. xxv. 2, sq.).

may profess to be a prophet and employ prophetic forms and follow the prophetic calling who has not heard the divine voice at all, or but very indistinctly and doubtfully. The oldest prophets, who lived before the dawn of history, could not have been mistaken; in their case the feeling must have been pure and true, the impulse really irresistible, otherwise prophecy would never have originated. But when an example had been supplied, a multitude of weak unqualified imitators may have been formed, and in this quarter as in others what was at first fresh and original power may have gradually sunk down to dead form bereft of all spirit.

The very commencement of a state of inspiration is exposed to self-deception: for a person may often think he hears something as coming from his God, and perhaps he really does hear something, yet only a very confused half-truth; and he would probably himself not hold it as the true voice of his God, if he were first to dwell upon and consider it quietly in his own mind, and not suffer himself to be carried away by haste and passion. Thus dreams were considered in ancient times to be a method by which the purer spirit finds its way to men; and that a higher thought, which probably has before desired to approach the mind, may sometime in the calm of a dream collect its force and urge itself upon it in the form of a formed conception, can hardly be denied. But even in those places in the Old Testament where this kind of revelation is looked upon as a true one, it always appears as occupying a lower stage, *e.g.* as peculiar to the distant patriarchs, or to old men whose minds have not retained their first freshness, Gen. xv.; xxviii. 12, sq.; xxxi. 23, 29; xlv. 2; Job iv. 12; Joel iii. 1; and that mere weak dreaming and bringing forth of fantasies by no means constitutes a true prophet, but may convey within it a disastrous delusion, is finally expressly maintained, Jer. xxiii. 25-29.

If, further, any human vocation demands as its basis original spiritual power, personal experience, profound conviction, and

the gift of immediate knowledge, prophecy demands this in the highest degree ; of all things it can least be transmitted or learnt. Notwithstanding, as in all human things, here also tradition and imitation very early succeeded to primitive originality. Whether rightly or wrongly, prophecy did not remain a stranger to the hereditary relation, many nations having had hereditary families of priests and soothsayers. Often a more or less qualified disciple has stepped into the place of an older prophet, and schools of prophets have been formed more or less extensively. From the same cause it often occurred that the exercise of the prophet's functions was conceived to be limited to a certain locality, as if the place itself might contribute something towards evoking in the prophet the elevated mood and with it the truth. But as a matter of fact the free and pure divine impulse is in this way in danger of altogether perishing, and the prophet without primitive and original faculty, who nevertheless describes somewhat as having come to him freely and immediately from God, is acting under stronger or weaker deception.

A further occasion of degeneracy of prophecy is transgression beyond the proper subjects of an oracle. For it follows from what has been said, that what the prophet can proclaim with justice as the word of his God is so far as the matter of it is concerned nothing else than the application of a universal divine truth to a given moral condition of human affairs, a clear intuition proceeding from the bright light of the spirit in reference to existing confusions and obstructions in the moral life. The utterance that is needed for this end comes within the range of the functions of the pure, *i.e.* the divine, spirit ; and if a prophet knows matters beyond this and is able to give decisions upon other questions, it is purely accidental. That, at all events, the great prophets which represent prophecy in its greatest perfection limited themselves to this, will be shown subsequently more at length. Notwithstanding, when the prophetic office has been once established and become generally

esteemed, curiosity too easily leaps this true limit. The multitude in its indolence desires to know matters of common life by easy and convenient means, and to get from an external authority decisions and incitements with respect to all possible things; often, too, in its confused conception of the true nature of prophecy, it proposes all manner of inquiries to the prophet who has once gained its confidence, demanding direction, for instance, as to whither a colony shall be sent, and whether this is in a fair way to be done (Judg. xviii. 5, sq.), or where and how something lost is to be found (1 Sam. ix. 6). And in this respect it appears that in earlier times, as long as no great abuses had arisen therefrom, even the prophets of a higher type often entered into less important questions in order to attach to them higher thoughts and admonitions. Still, whenever this transgression beyond the proper limits of prophecy becomes the rule, as was the case among many ancient peoples, the whole system of prophecy must necessarily descend from its purest elevation.

If, finally, the speakers have descended to this lower level, while the inquirers also are so easy to satisfy and yet so greedy to get direction upon all possible points, it need not create any further surprise if the prophet is misled to look increasingly to external aids and excitements instead of to the acuteness and vitality of the spirit, and if through the use of such means he is reduced to the necessity of first putting himself into a tolerable or apparent prophetic mood. He resorts to an idol (Judg. xvii.) or only to a holy ornament, towards which he directs his eye in the hour of his ecstasy (the *Urim*); he uses the lot in some of its various forms, or sometimes even a consecrated drinking cup (Gen. xlv. 2, sq.); he waits for omens (auguries) (Numb. xxiv. 1); in the end he has recourse to the legerdemain of necromancy and similar magical practices; and then he still finds timid and weak believers, perhaps himself believes to a certain extent in the efficacy of the means he uses.\*

\* Comp. further on this subject *Alterthümer des V. I.* pp. 296, sq., 343, sq., 390, sq., 3d ed.



Thus originate innumerable departures from the higher form of prophecy, to enumerate all of which this is not the place.

c. At last intentional fraud itself entered into prophecy ; that which was bound to serve the truth alone, against every man, was transformed into its opposite, becoming the agent of flattery and falsehood, and so of imposture. This extreme degree of degeneracy can only be explained from the great renown which prophecy had gained in so many quarters. The ancients assigned to the prophet the function of *decider*, and, in conjunction with the priest and sacrifices, of the successful *beginner* of a difficult work ; in the most important concerns of public life and the nation, it was not thought well to come to a determination without him, while what he inaugurated was held to be fortunate and acceptable to the deities, especially if he had sanctioned it in conjunction with the priest (Isa. xxviii. 7, sq.). In agreement with this general view the prophet is called also **חֲכִים** *decider*, than whom there is no higher judge ; his decision is a **חֲקִי**, a somewhat late poetic name, which had originally the good meaning of an oracle (Prov. xvi. 10), though gradually as an Aramaic word that had been transplanted from heathen Syria it came, with a secondary meaning, to denote soothsaying (Num. xxii. 7 ; Jos. xiii. 22 ; Isa. iii. 2 ; xlv. 25). How deeply rooted the faith of the ancients was that any weighty project, *e.g.* the conclusion of treaties, must have for it the decision and sanction of a seer, is seen in the fact that the word *vision* or *prophecy*, interchanges with the word *covenant* (Isa. xxviii. 15, 18). Since therefore a power of such magnitude, especially in great and civilised kingdoms, had been put into the hands of the prophet, we see at once how severe a temptation was thrown in his way, and how easy it would be for him from obsequiousness or love of gain to speak to please the great and those in power, who needed his assistance in winning the national consent to their plans : comp. especially Isa. xxviii. sq., and many passages in Jeremiah. But this is the complete reversal

and criminal destruction of the entire prophetic calling, and no worse thing can be said of prophets than, that they speak *from their own heart and mind*, deliberately putting down and silencing the God within them (Jer. xiv. 14 ; xxiii. 16 ; Ezek. xiii. 2, sq.), or that the true God has not sent them nor given them a message, while yet they act and speak as if they had a mission and charge from him (Jer. xiv. 14, sq. ; xxiii. 21, sq. ; xxvii. 15 ; xxix. 31 ; Ezek. xiii. 6). And we know too well how in many ancient nations prophecy without any general public opposition sank down to this lowest level, perishing thus in its caricature.

3. However, that prophecy must in every nation necessarily perish by endless aberrations of this kind, cannot be maintained. On the contrary, all such imperfections and vices, wherever they occur, may only serve to point out to the true prophets the dangers to which they are exposed and to preserve them from becoming like their caricatures ; and somewhere on the earth prophecy must attain to its true end, for it is inconceivable that a power in itself so good and necessary should be everywhere put forth only to fail of its end. And we find no difficulty in conceiving, that since prophecy was only one, although a very important, phenomenon in the great sphere of religion, it could soar above its fetters and devious ways to its true freedom, power, and grandeur, only where the whole religion of a nation was rising to its consummation and had already victoriously overcome the lower stages of its existence.

Now, history shows that prophecy, at least in one ancient nation, did at last not fail of its true end, but rising through all its stages up to the highest developed itself with growing purity and splendour. This one people of antiquity was the Hebrews ; and among them alone existed all the essential demands and conditions for this, as we can here but briefly indicate. The covenant with Yahvé (or the publicly acknowledged religion) which we now call the Old Covenant, was at

the time of its origin a form and constitution of religion which left older and more simple forms of religion far behind it and surpassed all ancient religions. It was thus early an elevation of the mind towards pure spiritual religion, an awakening and elevation of the national spirit to the purest divine thoughts and aims, an abiding and persistent summons and provocation to a life of true insight, power, and freedom, and to conflict with and victory over all the darkness and obstacles that stand in the way of this life. In conformity with this, it was from the first a constituent part of the law of this community, that the free course of the spirit should not be hindered, wherever and however it might move; yea, the whole community itself should be essentially nothing but the ever-living fellowship of the people and Yahvé in the spirit which united both (Exod. xix. 5, sq.; Num. xi. 29; Isa. lix. 21; lxiii. 11); how much more therefore ought this fellowship to manifest its life in the individual! And yet this great institution, with this indestructible foundation for all true progress, originated in the first years of man's earliest youth, at a period therefore when comparatively but very few fundamental truths could have been established, when a multitude of new truths with their application to the perplexities of life had still to be discovered, and the prophetic functions therefore were still quite indispensable. It follows that the prophets which arose in this state of things and in this community, if they would not remain behind the higher condition of things which had already become constitutional and traditional here, if they would be in accord with it and submit to the leading of its purer spirit, must also become prophets of a wholly different type from those which appeared amongst other nations. It was a necessity that they should advance from truth to truth, from one glimpse of divine wisdom and one degree of conviction to another; and they were able, in proportion as they remained faithful to the great ancient truth which had already been granted to them, to feel without intermission a wonderful inward strength and confidence, while

they could never sink back to a lower spiritual stage without first surrendering themselves, their whole consciousness, and all historical memory. In the name *Yahvé*, with the idea and history connected with it, lies for them an infinite charm; and to rise by meditation to *Yahvé*, to discern and lay firm hold of his mind and will, to utter a clear word from him when it was sent to them, this must become to them a demand, a stimulus and a task, involving the surrender of all lower human aims, in order that they may perceive the divine mind and will alone and make it plain to others wherever necessary. The vehemence which still impels and mightily moves them as prophets, must become the purified vehemence of the spirit, to withstand which is sin. It was in this people that prophecy won with growing fulness its true destination and accomplished its vocation, namely, to become the living centre, the never-resting consciousness of pure spiritual religion in the process of development; whoever gave satisfactory proof that he was a true prophet, had to be heard (Deut. xviii. 15, sq.). Here prophecy attained its true influence, freedom and spontaneity; for although several schools of prophets were founded, the law did not prevent any one of the people, without distinction of rank, age, or sex, from appearing as a prophet if he only showed his credentials; for instance, a herdsman fresh from the field (Amos vii. 14, sq.), or a woman (although the instances of women are far from preponderating), (Judg. iv. 4, sq.; 2 Kings xxii. 14; Neh. vi. 14; Ezek. xiii. 17-23); and although Jerusalem became naturally the seat of the generality and the most distinguished of the prophets, and first heard the sublimest utterances, so much so that the lower town is denominated simply *the valley of prophecy* (Isa. xxii. 5), nevertheless prophecy was never confined to one sacred spot; and it liberated itself even to a greater extent from external helps and supports. At an early period the prophets of this nation formed a true idea of the design and final destination of prophecy, this destination being no other than that at last all in the community

shall come to the prophetic independence and blessedness in Yahvé, special prophecy therefore ceasing of itself after its work is done (Num. xi. 29 ; Joel iii. 1, sq.) ; and the fact that it attained to this knowledge of its own goal, is the clearest evidence of its great freedom and perfection. On this account prophecy in this nation was refined ultimately into the purest form, ascended the highest stage that was set before it by its design, and in its results and fruits necessarily became of the greatest importance and imperishable value. All ancient prophecy was glorified and consummated in this nation, finding here its noblest model and its highest perfection ; and whilst in other nations it died out because it had gradually degenerated, among the Hebrews the time of its inward perfection and attainment of its destination was the time of its outward cessation ; whilst of the prophecies of the heathen only a few scattered traces and evidences have been preserved,\* the prophecies of the Old Testament live on in complete and indestructible monuments, which cannot even by moderns be sufficiently known and prized.

## 2. THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Confining ourselves now to the prophets of the Old Testament, let us consider first their essential characteristics.

1. How the spirit breathes on the true prophet and gives sight to his spirit in any dark condition of human affairs, being a subjective process, is in each individual case a secret, which does not admit of description. Nor is the prophet able by an effort of will to call up the higher state of mind. For although He who stands higher in the man, and who is mightier than the man himself, the divine spirit, wherever He really comes gains a power without limit, so that He can penetrate every

\* It would certainly be worth the labour to collect everything that concerns the prophecy of the different heathen nations. From the Greeks Eichhorn has brought together much in the preface to the last edition of his *Einleitung* (Introduction), vol. iv. At the present day the Hindoo and ancient Egyptian sources might be used.

darkness which human weakness and error have created ; still He does not come at the mere invocation of his name, nor can He be dragged by force ; He comes freely and unobservedly, at any moment, as if borne on a breath of favouring wind ; and He comes to the spot where he finds his place already prepared and a field adapted for his seed. If in our own time, after so many thoughts have been set circulating by all preceding centuries, it is still true that only traditionary and borrowed thoughts can be commanded by an act of will, how much less could a true prophet summon and compel the spirit as his servant ! Nevertheless, it is possible to trace more closely what preparation must have been made in the prophet's mind before the light of the spirit could visit him at the favourable moment.

At this point it is of first importance to remark, that there can be no true prophet of Yahvé who has not first directed his gaze into the glory and holiness of Yahvé himself, and has not become by what he has seen there a participant of the true eternal life, to such an extent that henceforth it is established and lives in him as his new and abiding life. The man that is to be a prophet must as an essential initiation have been made immovably certain of the true relation existing between the world and Yahvé ; must have gazed as in a distinct picture on the absolute exaltation and holiness of Yahvé's nature and felt himself entranced by it alone ; he must at some time have recognized both the divine power of the truth, even should the whole world oppose it, and himself as living and moving in it alone. At some time he must have entered by the actual labour and energy of his own soul into the divine thoughts, and have been lastingly captivated by them to such a degree that in their control he found his true strength and freedom. This is the first condition and the true commencement of all prophetic work, the consecration and inward call without which no one can become a genuine prophet, and it is he only who has thus first directed his gaze within and there had his vision clarified and strengthened that is able to see clearly and steadily into the

world without and work in it as a prophet. On the nature and power of this initiation, therefore, depends the whole future life and work of a prophet. It is true, subsequently moments will not be wanting when his gaze will again be fixed upon his inmost soul, when he will seek and find Yahvé again, comp. Amos xi. 1, with vii. 1 ; Ezek. x. with i. ; but when that true and impressive commencement has not been made, all future efforts must be weak and imperfect, unfruitful and empty ; whilst in the true prophets that commencement never loses its effect, and the memory of it abides with them imperishably in all future days. When a prophet of this type began a book of considerable length, he justly felt called upon to place at its head a description of that sacred moment (though often it had occurred long before) when he first recognized Yahvé in his true glory, and felt himself consecrated, strengthened and called by Him. Isa. vi. ; Jer. i. ; Ezek. i. 1-3.

It is not needful to consider at length, in this place, that this initiation of the prophet will not be an entirely isolated and arbitrary event in his spiritual life, and that even unknown to him threads of connexion hard to trace would be found, threads which go back far beyond that initiation into the confines of the consciousness of life and divine vocation ; for whoever after he has become a prophet reflects upon his origin and early history and the unity and connexion which exist throughout the whole life of a human soul, will find, that before that initiation even his spiritual condition was never such that it could not then have taken place ; hence Jer. i. 5, it is said, that the true prophet was ordained in the eye of Yahvé to his prophetic work from his birth.

The fact which we must consider, however, is, that that initiation must be to him but the commencement of a higher life. It will not of itself suffice ; the thread that had been just attached must not be broken off ; nor may any occasional necessity be the cause to drive him to look to the fountain-head again for light ; for instance, at the moment when a fresh perplexity

from without urges him ; he may not imagine that now he can compel the spirit as he chooses, though before his initiation he could not. On the contrary, the initiation must teach and urge him to maintain his new higher life ever afterwards with a strength and purity equal to that with which he once beheld it with the eye of his spirit and received it into his will and action. Just as he once turned his eye from a purifying gaze into Yahvé's glory upon the world, and from the world again to Yahvé, so must he perpetually without weariness keep his eye upon both with an ever clear and watchful gaze. He must keep his eye upon the world, and from his higher elevation review all human affairs, that he may understand the past and present fortunes of nations and rulers in all their stages, according as the divine spirit has determined and continues to determine them : but this is not all ! Woe to him if in the commotion of the world his eye loses its steadiness, and he form a view or idea hastily or perversely ; if he do not constantly recur to Yahvé alone, and, as if placed upon a high watch-tower (Hab. ii. 2 ; Isa. xxi. 6-8), look constantly and unweariedly to heaven, carefully attending to every gentlest motion of the divine will as his proper signal, and submitting himself every moment to the admonition and guidance of the pure spirit. Below everything is in perpetual change : but he must be always intent upon what the eternally unchanging divine voice has to say to every change and every condition of human affairs, and may never think that he has seen and heard enough. His eye must be always clear, his ear always open, as is beautifully described—Isa. l. 4, sq. And if he be thus constantly on the watch for the mind of Yahvé, he may in that perhaps also descry the future destiny of the nations and look far into the future. Hence the newly originated names צִפֹּקָה, *scout*, *spy*, *observer*, and שֹׁמֵר, *watchman*, are so expressive of the attitude of the true prophet, although they do not occur in common narration, since they express rather the subjective feeling of the genuine prophet himself with respect to the



condition and design of the prophetic spirit (Isa. xxi. 11, sq.; lii. 8; comp. lvi. 10; Mic. vii. 4; comp. v. 7; Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. iii. 17, comp. the fuller explanation, xxxiii. 2-7.\* Or as the *shepherd* watches carefully and unweariedly over his whole flock, so the prophet must encompass with his watchful love the community upon which he has fixed his eye; yet in doing this, he must look constantly to the true and only Shepherd, and every moment receive afresh from him as it were his charge and authority (Zech. xi. 5, seq.).†

This constant direction of the heart to Yahvé, however, will only then be a source of strength when it both removes everything opposed to it in the prophet's own bosom, and also suffers nothing to alarm or impede it from without, but in the midst of the conflict maintains against the whole world, if it must be, its divine confidence and energy. It is precisely this that has such prominence given to it in the noble description, Isa. l. 4, seq.; especially v. 6-9; and in the earlier descriptions of the prophetic initiations, the divine consecration of the prophet is followed immediately by a new wonderful strength, which is also courageously directed against the whole world, and destroys all human pusillanimity (Isa. vi. 5-8; Jer. i. 6-8, 17-19; Ezek. ii. 3, sq.; iii. 4, sq.).

The prerequisites therefore of prophetic functions are of such a kind that they might be really prescribed as the laws of the commencement of any great work, if not in the same degree

\* It certainly deserves to be noted that these ideas and names are not common until after Yesaya, while subsequently they become current in various forms throughout the entire thought of the prophets, as Hab. ii. 1, sq.; b. Isa. xxi. 6-10. Further, of these ideas it is that of the *scout* which is more especially seized and followed out; and without doubt this was first insisted upon in a most memorable manner, so that for a century it was variously applied, by a prophet of great individuality in a fragment which we have lost. Still it is evident that the figure of the *watchman* in the very ancient prophets and Isa. xxi. 11, sq. first suggested it.

† But the difference between this name and the foregoing one is, that this conveys far more of the idea of *ruling*; and since the function became less and less fitting for the prophets in later times, an explanation is given of the fact that this term did not become so common as the former. Remember who it was whom Ezekiel (ch. xxxiv.) calls the true *shepherd*!

yet in character and necessity ; as, in fact, the beautiful description, Isa. 1. 4-9, although borrowed from the picture of a genuine prophet, is still in this place presented as a universal model and type of every divine-human life ; and, in fact, it is said that at last all must be like prophets, that is, not so much in respect of the temporal externalities of prophecy—its language, gestures, and clothes—but in respect of the true inward life which has its foundation in those prerequisites. In the case of the prophet the bases and impulses of all higher life had to be manifested only in greater originality and more genuine power than in the case of other men ; but these bases and impulses were also the indispensable vessel which the divine spirit required that he might cast in his prophetic seed ; and if it was impossible that they should be absent in the case of a prophet who was moved by prophetic energy but once in his life and laboured but for a limited period, as, for instance, Amos, it was still more necessary that in the case of those who devoted their whole lives to the prophetic calling, as, for instance, Yesaya and Yéremyá, these impulses should perpetually operate as the ever fresh and living source of all the various forms of the activity of these men. And it is a valuable fact that in the case of these prophets we can often produce specific historical traces of their ever new submission to the warnings and instructions of the divine spirit long after they had been prophets, which enabled them to rise from one degree of prophetic certainty and power to another. Thus Yesaya had long been a prophet when in a new and perilous perplexity of his age he perceived a new admonitory sign from Yahvé, and without reserve expressed his desire to follow it (viii. 11) ; and, as he himself describes it, Yéremyá's entire prophetic life is essentially a continuous dialogue between him and Yahvé, as with his friend and master, interrupted only when it was necessary to work in the world, with the strength derived from the constantly renewed feeling of certainty : the dialogue is often attended by painful doubts on the prophet's part as a

man, threatening to lose itself in mourning and complaint to Yahvé; but in the end the prophet always gathers consolation and new strength from the higher voice which he hears; and we see the genuine prophet more and more developed in Yére-myá by his extremely dangerous circumstances, till finally, acknowledged and revered as the last great prophet of the Old Testament, he takes his high rank in history.

2. In this way it becomes possible for the prophet to be taken possession of by the divine thought, or, in other words, to take his part in the secret counsels of Yahvé, and as his intimate friend, to hear his voice and his decision (Jer. xxiii. 18, 22; comp. Amos iii. 7; iv. 13. For true as it is that the region of the pure, *i.e.* divine thought, which is far above time and individual human existence, is near to men, yet it hovers over men as an inaccessible, alien, and uninfluential treasure if no bridge has been thrown from it to the perplexities and difficulties of everyday life: it is as touchwood which can kindle in a moment when the kindred material is put into contact with it, but must remain without fire and effect while this is absent. So when the human spirit, having been prepared as we saw above, turns from reflection on the confusion of human affairs, full of zeal and fire, to that region, then by the contact of the inflammable material from both sides, suddenly an idea, an intuition, and a definite picture which had not dawned upon it before can be revealed as a flash of lightning before the mind. In the place of the confused pictures which are present to the eye of sense in the actual world, a pure picture of what is necessary before God rises before the spiritual eye, and what seems to the man necessary in the spiritual world crowds upon the soul in definite forms and outlines. The essential nature of the past is made known to the prophet as in one clear picture, the present is beheld without deception, and what he feels must come to pass in the future presents itself before his spirit as in tangible features and shapes; the prophet sees as with the clearest eye what Yahvé purposes and

prepares, whilst the world around him sees nothing of this wonderful light. This is the atmosphere in which the prophet is able to *forefeel* (*vorausfühlen*) as it were earlier and more sensitively than all the world besides what is still but in the womb of the future; and what other men experience subsequently and in a more material form, he is able to deeply and spiritually feel even thus early; in this atmosphere and region he sees a divine judgment necessarily coming while as yet no one else has observed anything of it, and by anticipation already feels the divine anger in his own inward fire (Amos iii. 7; Jer. vi. 11), yet also rejoices with divine joy, whilst around him sorrow and despair still prevail (Isa. xxi. 10; xl. 1, sq.). At first one compressed picture is presented to the prophet's mind, but afterwards this can fall into a multitude of individual pictures, as the application and execution is further carried out.

Upon this stage of prophetic vision we meet the prophet of the Old Testament. He knows this is his own peculiar sphere and region, and that his primary mission is to receive the purest and clearest intuitions from Yahvé without the aid of external helps, and still less by deceptions. The name of *seer* חֹזֶה is accordingly one of the most suitable precisely for these prophets, Amos vii. 12; 1 Chr. xxi. 9, sq.,\* and what he

\* When in apparent contradiction to this it is said, 1 Sam. ix. 9, that in earlier times רֹאֶה was used for נָבִיא, it is true certainly that in the ordinary post-davidic language רֹאֶה is employed of prophecy more rarely than חֹזֶה, and that חֹזֶה also hardly occurs in simple prose elsewhere than in the books of Chronicles. To this extent the narrative of 1 Sam. ix. 9 is justified. The *vision* itself in the history of the earliest ages is suitably called מַרְאֶה, Gen. xli. 2.; Num. xii. 6-8; 1 Sam. iii. 15, rather than מִחֻזָּה Gen. xv. 1. It is only later writers, as Hezeqiel and the author of Daniel, that again use the former more frequently. That the *seers* of the ancient type still continued to exist in later ages follows from the words Isa. xxx. 10. The common word רֹאֶה *seer* was accordingly the oldest Hebrew term; it was from the time of Moses that the genuinely Mosaic נָבִיא *prophet* gradually acquired a distinct meaning; and it was still later again that in the higher style the חֹזֶה *beholder* (*schauer*) was added. Thus in the history of these three names we can see the three great stages of the development of prophecy in the Hebrew nation.

utters is often called **חֲזִיוֹן** *vision* (*gesicht*), Isa. xxix. 11 ; xxi. 2 ; in fact these terms appeared so very suitable that every prophetic discourse, even if the spoken oracle or the written oration was intended, was still called *a vision*, **חֲזִיוֹן** 2 Sam. vii. 17 ; Isa. xxii. 5 ; **חֲזִיוֹן** Isa. i. 1 ; Prov. xxix 18, and the verb **חָזַה**, *to behold*, is used of prophesying or the utterance of a prophetic discourse, Isa. ii. 1 ; xiii. 1 ; Hab. i. 1, etc.

Now, with a vision of this kind there comes always a pure thought, inasmuch as whatever is beheld in Yahvé as having necessarily taken place or being about to take place, must also have a divine foundation, *i.e.* a truth ; the prophet does not merely see what Yahvé shows him, he also hears his word ring distinctly in his ears, and whatever he hears from him must *ipso facto* be nearly related to the utterance of pure truth, Isa. v. 9 ; xxii. 14, etc. Nevertheless in the case of the prophet the thought never appears as taking the lead of the picture, or putting itself prominently forward ; the thought is rather the mere basis of the picture, and only here and there becomes clearly and individually prominent, as Isa. i. 16, sq. ; in the same way as the poet's function is to present things that can be realized by the imagination and not pure thoughts. If, on the contrary, the thought should predominate the prophet would sink to the mere teacher and enter an entirely distinct sphere. That pure thoughts are deduced, established and spread amongst men, is a subsequent result of the prophecy of the Old Testament.\*

However, the great excellence of an intuition,† or individual perception, above pure didactic principles consists in this, that

\* *E.g.*, when Yesaya, xxii. 14, says, "This mortal sin will not be forgiven you, saith Yahvé !" we have, it is true, a very brief sententious expression, from which the pure thought may be easily deduced ; but inasmuch as the sentence nevertheless impresses the prophet immediately in reference to his hearers it is to be referred to the sphere of intuition or individual perception, and has not yet acquired the character of mere teaching.

† Germ. *Anschauung*. I have followed Mansel's rendering of the word. See *Prolegomena Logica*, p. 9.—Trs.

it springs immediately from present life and as immediately operates upon it. In the form of intuition the thought enters immediately into definite circumstances of life, and in reference to these supplies clear ideas and pictures; indeed, it then labours in the actual world to establish its truth. In the vision which the genuine prophet proclaims is included the clear foresight of the way in which a pressing perplexity must be resolved; and if it must be resolved so and not otherwise in the divine mind itself, there is supplied at the same time a powerful motive for corresponding action, for the conversion of the vision into resolution and deed. Genuine intuition carries along with it the germ of practical operation upon the necessities of the present, as well for the prophet in whose mind it was enkindled as for his hearers who receive it: in this respect it ranks infinitely above mere doctrine.

The vision and intuition of the prophet extends also into the past, many things recorded of antiquity appearing to him in an entirely new light, as Amos v. 25, sq.; Jer. vii. 22, sq. However, in those days antiquity was neither so distant nor so hard to understand, and it is specially the perplexities of the present and the future which oppress the prophet. His intuitive vision must preeminently include the future, and there can be no discourse in which he does not attempt to elucidate the picture which hovers before his eye of the solution of the future's perplexities.

That which the prophet beholds of the future is in respect of its matter of a twofold nature. The prophets of whom we are now speaking, *i.e.* the post-mosaic, received by virtue of their connexion with the community of Israel and the eternal truth which it supplied them with, the main elements of eternal hope and firm confidence in the end of all things. For where the eternal truths have been once so clearly and firmly grasped and made the basis of the entire national life as was the case in the ancient community of Israel, the strong

conviction must prevail that they can never be wholly lost again, but on the contrary must in the end issue in still greater well-being ; that therefore the community which possesses them has within it the germ of perennial life and endless progress, yea, that this community is the pledge of the eventual consummation of the entire aim of humanity. The imagination inspired by zeal and longing desire, is able to pursue at length the hopes which thus arise, and may elaborate them with equal vividness and truth, of which we have an instance in the formation of the so-called Messianic hopes. As a fact these hopes were thus formed under the influence of the never-resting burning desire and the struggles of the imagination of these prophets. But the foundation of all these hopes belongs not to these prophets ; in their case it is already as it were an old inherited and undoubted possession, within which the forecasting and longing soul is able to move freely in all directions. And without doubt it is a preeminent advantage of these prophets, that they all inherit a series of truths which commences with the sublime history of the foundation and preservation of the true community, and closes with the certain prospect of its eternal duration and the necessary consummation of all blessings which proceeds from it. But the present is often very far from the attainment of this consummation, indeed, the way towards it appears at times either lost in darkness or cut off. Here therefore the prophetic function is properly called into play ; and according as a prophet in the midst of the darkness of the present and immediate future points out the way to that eternal hope and consummation, is his magnitude and truth to be measured. For in his case too a picture, a definite idea of this immediate future, must be formed, issuing in the unchangeable hopes and pictures of the more distant future : but this picture of the immediate future is for the time manifestly of much greater importance and moment than that of the more distant future ; it includes a definite view and demand as to what has now to be done or omitted, and thus operates

immediately upon the determination of the will and the nature of the deed. Here is the first touchstone of the genuine prophet.

A projected picture of the future is essentially a presentiment, a surmise, *i.e.* an attempt and effort of the peering spirit to form from the basis of a certain truth a definite idea of the form the future will take, and to pierce through the veil of the unseen : it is not a description of the future with those strict historical lines which will characterise it when it actually unfolds itself. The presentiment or foreboding advances at once to the general scope and great issue. Before the prophet who is justly foreboding evil there rises immediately the vision of destruction as the final punishment : but probably this does not come to pass immediately, or only partially ; and yet the essential truth of the threat remains as long as the sins which provoked it continue, whether it be executed sooner or later. Or when the gaze of the prophet, eager from joyous hope or sacred longing, dwells on the consideration of the so-called Messianic age, this hovers before him as coming soon and quickly, what he clearly sees appearing to him as near at hand ; but the development of events shows how many hindrances still stand in the way of the longed for and surmised consummation, which again and again vanishes from the face of the present ; nevertheless, the pure truth that the consummation will come and must come precisely under the conditions foretold by the prophet, remains unchangeably the same ; it retains its force during every new period, and from time to time some part of the great hope finds its fulfilment. Further, the presentiment endeavours to delineate its subject-matter with the greatest clearness and definiteness, and in order to describe really unseen things borrows the comparisons and illustrations that are at hand from the past and popular ideas. To set forth the presentiment of evil there occurs the memory of Sodom, or all the terrible things of nature ; whilst for bright hope and aspiration, there is the memory of the Mosaic and Davîdic



times. But the prophet does not really intend to say that only the things that occurred in Sodom and under Moses and David will recur, or that mere earthquakes and tempests will happen, but using these comparisons he means something far higher.

The prophetic presentiment, finally, endeavouring in certain distressing situations to peer still more closely into the future, ventures even to fix terms and periods for the development of the events which are foreseen as certain; yet all these more definite limitations and calculations are so many essays of a peculiar class to be conceived of and judged by their own nature, and from the motive that produced them. To say nothing of the fact that everything that the prophet threatens or promises is conditioned by the reception which his advice and command, indeed, which his suppressed yet necessary and of themselves clear presuppositions, meet with. Accordingly the prophetic picture in the end is not to be judged by its garments, but by the meaning of the thoughts and demands which is hidden within it; and it would be a source of constant misconception to conceive of and judge picture and presentiment otherwise than in accordance with their own peculiar life and nature. Jerusalem was not destroyed so soon as Micah (ch. i.-iii.) foreboded, nevertheless, inasmuch as the same causes which provoked that presentiment were not radically removed, the destruction did not ultimately fail to come. Literally Jerusalem was neither besieged nor delivered exactly as Yesaya (ch. xxix.) foresaw: still, as he had foreseen, the city was exposed during his lifetime to the greatest danger and experienced essentially as wonderful a deliverance. In the calculations (Isa. xxxii. 14, sq. comp. v. 10; xxix. 1-8, and esp. v. 17) if the words are taken slavishly, there lies a minor contradiction, which with a freer comparison of all the pictures as they might exist before the mind of the prophet, it is granted, quickly disappears. The punishment of Israel, (Hos. ii.) consists in expulsion into the wilderness; ch. iii. sq. it consists rather in other things, *e.g.* in being driven away to Assyria and Egypt; yet all these presen-

timents were equally possible and contain no contradiction, unless they are confounded with historical assertions or even express commands. As appears from Jer. xxvi. 1-19, at this period of Jewish history a correct feeling of the true meaning of prophetic utterances in this respect was still in existence, and they were not so misunderstood as they were in the Middle Ages, and as they still are in many quarters.

3. Now, when such a distinct picture of the dim future, accompanied at the same time with its higher thought, surprises the genuine prophet, it is as if a strong hand from above grasped and held him, the superior power of which he cannot withstand: it is the sacred moment when a new and distinct truth comes upon him and so possesses him that he becomes under its power another man, and would rather let his life go than it. *The hand (upon him) becomes mighty* is the standing phrase to denote this moment of ecstasy, Isa. viii. 11; Ezek. iii. 14; comp. 2 Kings iii. 15. It may happen that his advice is sought, so that his words are only an answer to proposed questions (pre-supposing that he really finds in the divine mind an answer); comp. Isa. xxx. 1, sq.; xxxvii. 1-7; Jer. xxxvii. 3, 17; Ezek. xx. 1, sq.; Zech. vii. 2, and the narratives in the historical books. But the mighty hand from above may seize him without any such external occasion; in fact, in this case the inspiration is likely to be more original and vigorous; and in no case could inquiries be made of a prophet unless he had previously shown his innate prophetic calling. The true prophet therefore does not remain at some seat of oracles proudly waiting until he is sought after. On the contrary, as he observes everything and bears all the circumstances of his nation and the entire human family upon his heart, so, when with respect to a problem of his age he actually sees and hears that which Yahvé brings irresistibly before his eye and ear, it seems to him that he is *sent* by Yahvé his master to speak and to act before all the world according to that truth alone which lives within him. And really it is of the greatest importance

that the divine office of the prophet was looked upon according to the law of the ancient religion itself, as a mission into the storms and floods of the great world, in order that the truth, with the prophet as its instrument, might approve itself in action, by conflict, suffering and victory, and that the prophet might work not for himself but for the kingdom of God and its claims alone, Isa. vi. 8. Accordingly the prophet appears in public in any place where he can hope to make known with greatest effect what he has to make known; most frequently at the temple, where the priests and a large number of the people assemble, Joel i. 2, sq.; Amos vii.-ix; Hos. ix. 8; Jer. vii. 1, sq.; xix. 14; xxvi. 1, sq.; xxviii. 1, sq.; Zech. vii. 2, or in the market place at the court of justice, Amos v. 10; Isa. xxix. 21; but he also appears where he is least expected, and will in no case be repulsed, Isa. vii. 1, sq.; xxii. 15, sq.; xxviii. 7, sq. There is no subject of moral and political life that can be too difficult or uninteresting to the prophet, no person too exalted or powerful; priests, princes, and kings, as well as others, must hear his voice if he is really commissioned by Yahvé; and where the greatest danger prevails, there especially he steps into the breach, Ezek. xiii. 5. And lastly, he does not labour for his own country alone, but as all nations are alike before Yahvé and his spirit, so the prophet from his exalted position reviews the condition of all the surrounding nations and with respect to them also, either with threats or rejoicings, utters what is irresistibly present to his spirit in the moment of vision; comp. 1 Kings xix. 15, sq.; Jer. xxviii. 8.

As the genuine prophet will not utter the word of Yahvé before it has grown distinct and certain to him, having become as it were a part of his deepest life and thought, so he would commit a deadly sin if from fear of men and base considerations he should suppress the divine voice which really speaks within him. This would be on his part the sin against the Holy Ghost; and in this nation the most vivid conviction

prevailed, that the prophet might at no price dare to deliver the divine message in any other way than he had received it in the sacred moment, without dissent or qualification, Amos iii. 8 ; 1 Kings xiii. esp. ver. 21-26, and the book of Jonah. And as he neither can nor ought to resist the pure impulse, so all must leave him freedom for the fulfilment of his duty, whether he proclaims pleasant or unpleasant things ; even according to the external law he was held to be the inviolable ambassador of a higher One, Deut. xviii. 15, sq. ; Jer. xxvi. 1-19. It is true that this renders his responsibility exceedingly great ; the result alone can justify him fully, Jer. xxviii. 8, sq. ; and the law justly considered him guilty of the greatest crime who was proved to have uttered what was false and ungodly, thus misleading the people, Deut. xviii. 20-22. But the genuine prophet who breathes, speaks, and acts purely in the mind of Yahvé is quite unable to do anything else than to proclaim that which the result itself will substantially confirm, because it was conceived in Yahvé and in him is necessary. He has nothing at his command but the word of Yahvé, no weapon either of attack or defence, and must withdraw and wait the result when he has done what would be a sin in him to leave undone. Yesaya is the great model of this majestic repose and self-possession after the greatest excitement, viii. 16, sq. ; xxx. 8, sq. Yet the prophet's word is piercing as fire and breaks the rocks in pieces, and he realizes in himself that the divine spirit with irresistible force can do all things, even lifting up and casting down kingdoms, punishing or restoring nations, Jer. i. 10 ; xxiii. 29 ; Hos. vi. 5 ; Zech. xi. ; Isa. xxxi. 2.

Hence in the discourses of the prophets there is so often heard the word of Him whose mind is so much one with theirs that they are lost in his presence. His presence is indicated by that immediate *I*. The higher pure spirit obtains in them clearness for itself, and brings forth its own infallible and productive thought. And in the hour of action or revelation this thought of the divine spirit comes forth into the world

with an immediateness and force equal to the strength and irrepressibility with which it exists in its instrument the prophet. And these are the most exalted passages, the peaks and summits of the prophetic discourse, where his own *I* entirely disappears in the presence of another *I*, and the truth and power of the eternal spirit itself involuntarily speaks from his mouth. Which however by no means implies that the genuine prophet on this account, really forgets himself and begins to speak without self-consciousness or ends in unconsciousness and frenzy. True, the matter and the state of his consciousness are from the very first unusually exalted ; it is not the ordinary consciousness, devoid of divine thought, and incapable of divine exertion. Neither has his introduction of God as speaking in the first person sunk into a crystallized and idle habit, in some such way as Mohammed in his later Suras has lost the power of abstaining from the use of this stiff and boastful form ; but the prophet always starts from his own experience to announce what he has already seen in the spirit, and again ends with his own experience. Nor in the course of his utterance does he ever lose the consciousness of the fine boundary-lines between the divine and the human. In the course of his speech he changes from one person to the other when it seems needful, and makes new starts from a purely human standpoint, introducing new proofs, new ideas and considerations ; and at suitable points does not at all scruple to let his human feelings be heard. When, however, his profoundest and purest thought has reached its greatest height, and the divine power can no longer be withstood, or when the prophet is wholly absorbed in the blissful contemplation of the eternal hope, then quite involuntarily the eternal "*I*" breaks from his lips, whether it be in an address to his hearers or in a dialogue between the Eternal and himself. This "*I*" then carries with it its own truth and necessity, and produces an effect from which there is no escape. It proclaims thoughts in reference to which no one has more profound reverence (religion) than the prophet

himself. Thus in the style of the prophets there is a constant transition from profound depths to lofty heights, from overpowering agitation to self-possession and repose, and it is only on the heights that the pure God comes forth in order to seize and possess the people's soul with a force unknown at other times. At least this is the case with those prophets whose writings we have here to study, while in the primitive unbroken vigour of a greater antiquity and upon the steep and jagged heights of Moses, it was the simple divine "*I*" alone which the prophet felt as coming forth and speaking from within him.\*

Apart from this subjective necessity of expression, it is the special peculiarity of prophetic style, that it is not of marked and specific character, but, according as the design requires, it assumes any one of the many forms of discourse, and uses any or all of them as the end in view dictates. The forms of poetic utterance are prescribed, and do not admit of indefinite change and variety; for the object of the poet is not primarily to produce an effect upon others; he must satisfy himself and his taste and art. The prophet desires and is compelled to influence others, and to influence them in the most direct and profound way. Accordingly all means and all forms of presenting his thoughts which most effectually attain his object are fitting for him.

*a.* Of course the primary and most natural means of prophetic utterance is *oral discourse*. However, in the case of these prophets it is no longer so summary and purely dictatorial as it was in the case of Moses. On the contrary, we have here elaborated addresses, in which the endeavour to support and discuss in any and every manner the positions maintained is visible. While there is not the slightest appearance of any feeling that the truth of their positions depends upon the prophets' proofs, still the necessity is felt that they should justify them to their hearers. Divine truth is closely related to the

\* *Comp. Hist. of Israel*, ii. 164, sq. (ii. 233, sq.).

human spirit, and the prophets never issue bare commands and directions. From their high elevation they do not easily grow weary of putting themselves *en rapport* with their hearers. Oral discourse is the prophet's mightiest and readiest means of utterance ; to this he has always ultimately to return ; for it is the plainest interpreter of his own soul. It was in the case of the prophets that oral discourse was most perfected, as we can still gather from the written relics left to us : the prophet was the true, schooled popular orator, and every branch of public oratory in the nation was found united in him. But we must remember that oral discourse may rapidly follow all the changes of feeling and fancy ; it may lament and rejoice, threaten and admonish, raise itself more or less to purely poetic elevation and calmness, becoming temporarily an actual lyric even. (Amos v. 2 ; Isa. i. 21 ; v.1.)

b. Nevertheless, oral discourse is not suitable for all times and places, as regards either the prophet or his reader. The truths the prophet has to proclaim do not come to him primarily in the form of mere words or discourses, as was explained above ; but in the more compressed and living shape of intuitions, symbols, pictures, which move before his soul as if they were living creatures. Since, therefore, as we saw before, his whole mind constantly lingers with Yahvé, in him longs and lives and moves, it follows that Yahvé must ever be the ruling and moving person in all these imaginings and *visions*. If, for instance, the prophet foresees coming calamity, in his spirit he sees Yahvé creating and sending this or that form of punishment. When the dark picture first breaks upon his view, he will probably be himself terrified at the greatness of the approaching chastisement ; perhaps ventures, as if in colloquy with his master and friend, to project another picture, another possibility ; and yet at last he comes back to the higher divine necessity, until the certainty of it stands clearly before him and he feels compelled to proclaim it. Now, the prophet often begins his public discourse with the narrative of what was

thus first stirred within him and first took form before his mind in such animated secret colloquy with Yahvé. The hearers also may often be most quickly aroused and moved by such a vivid presentation to the imagination of short striking pictures and by the narrative style of the discourse. And just as the prophet's first prophetic thoughts and emotions come in the form of pictures, so again that which appears most distant and most difficult to know, to his inquiring mind takes the shape of pictures, as it were in distant clouds upon his heaven. We may say therefore that the prophet begins with visions and ends with them. These visions are often described as they moved before the prophets' minds, as Amos vii. 1-9, vi. ; Jer. xxiv. ; 1 Kings xxii. 19-23. Still they hardly suffice in a strict oration without further explanation and application ; they are rather as it were precursors or essays, which cannot fail in the prophet's own mental exercises, but are not necessary in the public discourse itself. The case of Yesaya clearly shows that the greater the prophet is the less he needs them in his actual oral utterances. Yesaya, whenever he appears before the people, works up his own subjective intuitions into the pure and clear stream of oratory, and thereby produces really a clearer and mightier impression. A picture, like a similitude, often stands in need of further explanation (comp. Num. xii. 6-8).

Nevertheless, cases may occur in which the prophet has special reasons for precursorily presenting the *picture* alone. For the actual presentation of the pure case would perhaps at first defeat the object aimed at, if the hearers are unable to receive it. The prophet may prefer, for instance, to enchain the attention of his hearers by the apparently harmless picture, and then to suddenly surprise them with the application of it. Thus the elder Mikha (1 Kings xxii. 19-22) presents first a vision of a scene in the heavens, in order then to draw from it quickly a dangerous application. If, again, the picture is of a more harmless kind and assumes the form of lower earthly things, bringing everything down to the level of the hearers



themselves, the purpose being veiled, we have a similitude (*parable*), a manner of speech in which the prophets manifest great art and ease (2 Sam. xii. 1-9 ; Isa. v. 1-7 ; Hos. xii. 11). Or in the face of false prophets and defiant hearers, the prophet may even purposely present his vision exactly in its original compressed and enigmatical shape, with a view of laying before them an enigma as to the solution of which it is intended they should despair ; a remarkable instance of which we have in Isa. xxix. 1-8 ; comp. v. 11.

c. A further fact must be taken note of. In the prophet's style it may be abundantly evident how essentially he is a man of power and action. Although his work is confined to the proclamation of Yahvé's word, he will not merely proclaim this with his mouth but set it forth by his entire life and labours. The genuine prophet knows the just limits of his work ; but within these limits speech and action, life and word, are of equal importance and are inseparably connected. His action must accord with his speech ; everywhere he must attest by his deeds the value of the thoughts within him ; in fact, his action first connects his words with life. This appears in innumerable ways. It is to the prophets often an absolute necessity when they are about to utter a thought to express it at the same time by means of external illustrations and symbols taken from their own persons and their own conduct. The overburdened thought passes into a visible symbol, intelligible to all, from a purely inward impulse, without any ulterior motive ; and the symbol is not a mere type of the future but already the actual commencement of it. If the prophet's heart is overwhelmed by the presentiment, that calamity and captivity must follow, he lays a yoke upon his shoulder, or goes bare-foot, like a captive ; or if his soul is overflowing with the presentiment of prosperity and victory, he puts on horns, like a crushing conqueror ; in such cases seeming himself to go through the conditions and circumstances the divine necessity of which he feels as no other man does. This may be an impulse coming sud-

denly upon the prophet and as quickly attaining its end ; but often he stays long in this state, until the presentiment has been fulfilled in the world (1 Kings xi. 30, sq. ; xxii. 11 ; Isa. xx. ; Jer. xix. 1, sq. ; xxvii. 2 ; xxviii. 10-12 ; comp. the case of a prophet who represents in his own person a dangerous parable, 1 Kings xx. 35-43). On the other hand, the events and striking signs of the world often by means of the great and overpowering thoughts which agitate the breast of the prophet become so participant of life and pregnant with meaning that he sees in them symbols and demonstrations of the spiritual truths that move him, and often in addition to himself a circle of hearers are filled with the same feelings. There needs but be some little similarity and association of ideas, and at once the external event has lost its isolated and dead state, although in this matter mistake is very possible (1 Sam. xii. 16-19 ; 1 Kings xiii. 3 ; 2 Kings xiii. 15-19). But the most important point on this head is, that to a prophet who devotes a long life to his high calling, his wife and his child, and all the seemingly unimportant things of his private life, together with his manifold experiences, may become holy and radiant with divine light ; so that the longer he lives the more he may surround himself with external witnesses, monuments, and monitors of the truth which proceeds from his spirit and through this from Yahvé : as will be explained more fully below, especially in the case of Yesaya (comp. Hos. i.-iii. ; Jer. xiii. ; xvi. ; xviii. ; xxxii). If, *e.g.* a higher thought has come into the world which the people cannot readily comprehend, the prophet makes himself or one of his children a symbol and surety of it, by embodying it in a short clear name which he gives to himself or his child. As certainly as he himself or his child lives and breathes, the thought is preserved in the pregnant name ; the life and existence of the person is inseparable from the thought ; and all the members of this house spend their days as living symbols and pledges of the truths connected with their existence.

This desire to connect a prophecy with some living proof,

thus bringing it into close relation with life, manifests itself in another form. The great prophets often endeavour to confirm a truth, that is true and valid of itself and before Yahvé, by a further *sign*, a sort of prefiguration and beginning of the thing itself. The prophets present and the hearers desire and accept this sign in the simplest manner; and as long as the truths themselves continue to possess but limited sway and certainty, such a help is on both sides valuable and harmless. Still, in the case of the genuine prophet of the Old Testament, the sign is never the main thing: it is always a simple accompaniment, assistance, not the thing, *i.e.* the truth itself; and as soon as the truth has grown strong enough, the sign of itself falls into disuse. See further below. *How* a prophet gave such signs could in many cases be quite intelligible to us only by personally witnessing the signs themselves, which is now impossible; it is certain that in actual life the sign played but a subordinate part. We may further remark, that of course the signs which a prophet offers have been taken from the actual experience of his life, and that his license in handling them extends only to the semi-poetic manner in which he narrates them. That in the later period, however, when the prophet had generally become much more of a pure author the signs which he narrated were often creations of his own mind merely, will be explained in detail below when we come to Yéremyá.

4. Inasmuch then as the prophet appears as the messenger of Yahvé not merely in word but in his whole life and in power and deed, the world rightly expected from him not only counsel but higher help in the distresses of life. At a time when other methods of giving deliverance and higher help were very few, any form of succour was eagerly sought from him. And incontestably the great prophets were in this direction also instruments of true salvation; and they supply evidence that the knowledge and the amelioration of so much human misery proceeds from the living power of the spirit of Yahvé. Nevertheless, how easily in the case of the recipient

of benefits of this kind all sorts of misconceptions and improper desires may get the upper hand, appears in the ancient narrative, 2 Kings v. 11. But this is not the place to pursue this subject further.

In conclusion, it will be well to take a nearer view of the chief functions and cares of the life of one of these prophets. For we are now at the point whence we can most clearly see those great characteristics which best distinguish them from all the prophets of the ancient world, and also how close the tie was which united them to the primitive condition and indestructible foundations of the community of the true religion. Just as Moses, the first prophet of the community, had been its leader, so these prophets, however much the times were changed in so many respects, always kept their eyes primarily fixed upon the great general condition and situation of the community; and although they feel that they are called by Yahvé, it is always only that they may the more faithfully bear upon their hearts the common weal of his people and the more keenly watch over its relation to him. Although the monarchy had been recently introduced into Israel, and although at least the prophets in Judah considered this as indissolubly connected with the house of David as the only legitimate family, this nevertheless only served to make them look all the more jealously to the eternally essential bases of every state that is not abandoned by the divine will and spirit, and to learn all the more to contend with a divine courage even against the highest human authorities in the realm, should this be necessary, without wishing to overthrow or even to depreciate them. Thus in the midst of all the changes of time they direct their gaze steadily upon the past, the present, and the future of the great kingdom of which they are members, and which had been consecrated to God from the hoar past; and, according as the wants of every new period demand, they speak with reference to its true divine position and divine fortunes only. The more accidental and unimportant concerns of which the (acc. p. 19 sq.)

older prophets spoke, gradually disappear from the elevated sphere of vision contemplated in the counsels and discourses of these prophets; and express themselves with regard to individuals of the community only as far as they are of great importance in the history of the community itself.\* But while without intermission they keep a watchful eye upon the affairs of the community, of true religion, and its changing position in the great world, they direct their gaze with equal intensity to those of other nations, and speak from their exalted position in reference to them also as the condition of the time requires. And the more Israel's history became linked in with the general history of all the nations of the earth, by the rise of the Assyrian power and its successors, the wider the range of the vision of the prophets grows, and their discourses speak more and more definitely of the history and the future of foreign nations. This is in general the sphere of vision and the subject-matter of the prophecies of these prophets.

### 3. THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CONSIDERED HISTORICALLY.

It scarcely needs to be remarked, that the above general characteristics of a genuine prophet of the Old Testament assumed very different forms in different individuals when looked at with respect to their personal and poetic peculiarities. But apart from this, there are specific differences observable which follow the development of the whole history of the nation, and it is but gradually that this wonderful prophecy reaches its greatest perfection.

1. The long period from Moses to Amôs may be taken as the first age of the post-Mosaic prophets of the Old Testament. It is true we have of this period scarcely anything at first hand besides the small book of Yôél: nevertheless this little book, together with the scattered historical reminiscences, enables us

\* As Shebnâ, Isa. xxii. 15-25.

to form a tolerably clear conception of the character of the prophecy of this first period. We find here the most primitive condition of Israelitish prophecy but little changed, and the wonderful but almost inaccessible and rugged greatness of Elijah will serve us as a model. On the one hand, the sublime truths of genuine religion and the true community exert the greatest power in the hearts of the prophets of this period; and the greatest amongst them, who did their work wholly from an original, personal and unborrowed power, developed the most prodigious force and the most influential activity; it is but one of the results of their great labours that a constantly increasing number of disciples collect first around Samuel and then especially in the northern kingdom around Elijah, by which means, it is true, prophecy suffered a loss of personal power in the case of many (as, for instance, Elisha ranks far below Elijah), yet it gained the more in the rapidity with which its truths were spread over a wider area (1 Sam. x. 5, sq.; xix. 21, sq.; 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13, 19, sq.; xxii. 6; 2 Kings ii. 7, 16, sq.; comp. with 1 Sam. iii. 1). On the other hand, the prophet has not advanced beyond his primitive condition of undivided inflexible power: as was said above, p. 42, he speaks and labours not with quite the same immediateness in his decisions and commands as Moses once did; still, when he speaks or directs, the people are prone to submit themselves without contradiction or doubt, or, if they resist, they still entertain towards him a superstitious dread: his word is still almost a command; in politics, it is like the word of a lawgiver; in war it is like the word of a commander. And Yóél still retains, both in his utterances and their effect, this primitive, antique prophetic greatness. Accordingly this prophecy really lacks adaptiveness and mediateness; its attitude towards the people is still rather that of a foreign, unyielding power, of an external authority, entering too little into the nation's innermost spiritual life. It is true it contends victoriously with the most prodigious energy against heathenism in all forms, against

kings and the entire nation. Elijah is the giant of prophecy, fighting with the aid of heaven and earth, who after the most wonderful battles and exertions finally overcomes all opposition and enters into his glory. But at this stage prophecy has not become conscious of its own hidden deficiencies and perils; in many respects therefore it labours under the helpless weight of its own ancient character and functions, and has not realised to itself its full spiritual greatness and power. The enigmatical feeling of the moment still plays a great part in it. Under its impulses Samuel chooses Saul; a prophet from Yuda, as if feeling the perilous nature of his undertaking, rushes post-haste into the northern kingdom to deliver a threatening message, and as quickly returns home again without accepting any hospitality (1 Kings xiii.); a disciple of Elisha's anoints Yehu in haste, as it were in flight, as though he were treading upon hot ground (2 Kings ix. 1-11). This prophetic state of mind, however, is often a difficult acquirement; and accordingly in the case of prophets who are not amongst the greatest, we find certain means of calling it up were resorted to, music, for instance, especially when the prophet, like those of the earlier times, sought an answer in reference to all manner of inquiries (1 Kings xxii. 14; 2 Kings iii. 15). And in the case of such prophets, when at last the state of mind is present, it may pass over into the violent and uncontrollable action of one sense or feeling (1 Sam. xix. 24; Num. xxiv. 4, 16). It often happens that every other authority has to give way before the extreme violence of this form of prophecy. It is only a truly kingly spirit like David's that is able to maintain beside it his dignity, without either despising or annihilating it. And David presented to the world the first great example of the happiest co-operation of royal and prophetic authorities, whilst all weaker royal heads, Saul, Rehabeam as well as Yerobeam, and the house of Ahab, fall before the bare words of this prophecy. With the dethronement of kings, however, in this way, it was by no means always a David that was put in their place: the

house of Yerobeam was no better than the house of Rehabeam, the house of Yehu was not long wiser than the house of Ahab. Notwithstanding all the great excellencies, therefore, which prophecy, moved by the genuine moral spirit of true religion, already manifests, we cannot during this long period recognise it as having reached its perfection. The deficiencies which still cling to it, sprang essentially from the heathen, pre-mosaic age, and have not yet been overcome. Nevertheless, it was not without a result that it had been constantly developing itself during the long series of centuries. For it rises

2. in another but a more perfect form during the period of more than a century and a half from Amôs and Hoséa to the times after the reign of king Manasseh. True, the ancient simple reverence of the people for the prophet has been completely broken down. In the midst of Israel, the prophetic nation, already many ventured, for instance, to ridicule the nonfulfilment of prophetic threats, since the *day of Yahvé*, i.e. the great day of judgment and punishment, the approach of which the prophets had so often announced, appeared never to come as it had been threatened, especially before the destruction of Samaria (Amos vi. 3; ix. 10, comp. v. 18; Isa. v. 19; xxviii. 9, sq. 22). Indeed, many no longer hesitated to consider the truest words of a prophet, because they were inconvenient to them, to be no more than abuse, and on that ground to prosecute the best and most conscientious prophet (Mic. ii. 6, sq.), or under any pretence to evade his message (Isa. vii. 12). And just when the nation begins so strongly to feel that it is no longer a child but of full age, there breaks out a dangerous schism in the midst of these very prophets who profess to serve not heathen gods but Yahvé himself, for very many, forgetful of the true prophetic strictness and virtue, flatter the passions and wickedness of the great, oppose the better prophets, and think that they are thereby doing something very suitable to the times (Isa. xxviii, sq., Mic. ii. sq.). By this means the attitude of the true prophets of Yahvé acquires great diversity. If genuine



prophecy will not succumb and perish when its existence is imperiled by both internal and external dangers, it must collect all its energies and most hidden powers and make every effort that is possible and allowable. For it has to contend against innumerable foes, even against painful contempt of itself and also against its own caricature. And all this was in fact accomplished by it during this period. Victorious against its own dangers, it rises as with new youth, regenerated with the most wonderful vigour; it gains extraordinarily in self-denial, freedom, and adaptiveness, and comes to that stage where its work in its own age is the purest and most beneficial, while for all ages it is most memorable and imperishable. This brief century and a half, or two centuries, is the golden age of the prophecy of the Old Testament, and in Yesaya we have the most perfect expression of this elevation, the greatest of a multitude of great prophets of the same type. It is not until we reach this period that we can clearly see how many profound and mighty causes there were at work in this prophecy from the earliest times, which enabled it to attain this height. Still, in the case of the great model of a prophet of this period, Yesaya, we find the favourite offer and presentation of *signs*, and a few other remains of earlier, more violent, and less perfect centuries, a proof that the highest conceivable stage of prophecy still remained to be completely attained.

3. Immediately following this most magnificent period of ancient prophecy, an unusual stagnation of development is visible, owing probably to the severe persecution of the prophets of Yahvé in which Manasse took pleasure.\* But still internal stagnation was impossible at this time when prophecy was just unfolding most vigorously its noblest energies. Towards the end of the kingdom of Jerusalem, under Yosia and his successors, prophecy rises with fresh determination, and maintains its position into the exile with an indestructible vigour. And in reality the refinement and advances towards

\* Comp. Hist. of Israel, iv. 206, sq. (iii. p. 715, sq.)

perfection, which it had striven after so vigorously in the second period, are energetically pursued in this. The few vestiges of the violence and inability of its youth, which are still visible in Yesaya, it now casts off, and confines itself wholly to its true inviolable sanctuary—to the clear and pure divine word. And this word is clearly recognized, on the one hand, as distinct from the imperfect species of revelation, *e.g.* revelation by dreams (which further implies a deep feeling of the innate necessity of the truth of the message), whilst, on the other hand, the sufficiency of the word, which will not violently force itself upon any one, is realised (Jer. xxiii. 28, sq.; (Ezek. iii. 17-21; xxxiii. 2, sq.). It is wonderful to see how Yéremyá, the model of this last form of prophecy, and his disciple Hezeqiel, although they are in the midst of the commencing decline of the prophetic office, are the first to declare the true view of the nature of this office, and in their entire lives confirm their view by their example. Similarly, at this period, genuine prophecy has in the life of the nation also won the victory over all degenerate half developed forms of it. In the first period, the priesthood meddled greatly with prophecy, the oracle (the *Urim*) belonging even by the law to the high-priest, while often any other priest deemed himself able to impart it (Judges xvii. sq.). Together with the prophetic office of Yahvé many other heathen oracles were retained amongst the masses of the people, although they might be illegal. In the second period, that of the great prophets, the prophetic office is separated so decidedly from the priesthood that the chasm is not again to be filled up, whilst the heathen oracles, as being far beneath the dignity of true prophecy, are scarcely referred to by the latter (Isa. viii. 19, sq.). In this period, scarcely anything is any longer known of the *Urim* amongst the people, and from the time of Manasse it rarely occurs that a man of any influence applies to necromancers or other heathen soothsayers. During the first period prophecy stoops to unimportant and casual inquiries; during the second it is

true it still addresses direct threats against exalted personages (Isa. xxii. 15), but manifestly fixes its eye with increasing decisiveness and exclusiveness upon the important general questions of the age ; in the third, it is content to unfold purely and calmly great general intuitions.

But contemporaneous with this effort to attain the highest development, there already exists a manifold and inevitable decline of ancient prophecy ; and they are no other than Yéremyá and Hezeqiel who thus early show the plainest marks of it. For the entire spirit of the nation tended at that time towards a certain enervation and exhaustion, as though the great struggles of earlier ages had overstrained it. The complete dissolution of the kingdom was, in particular, unavoidable. And the prophetic spirit of the people participated in the general enervation, notwithstanding its attainment of higher perfection. Previous prophecy had been always most intimately bound up with the condition of the kingdom and the life of the people, and had unfolded its noblest powers in public orations and public activity. The decline and dissolution of the state must, therefore, react injuriously upon prophecy, and convert the prophet who had been the public speaker into a writer only, as may be partially seen in the case of Hezeqiel. For though it is true that the generality of the prophets of the previous centuries had been both authors and speakers, yet in the case of those early prophets, as will be explained subsequently, literature was but the result and fruit of public oratory and public work. When, therefore, of these two occupations but one was prosecuted, and that the derivatory and less powerful, the consequence was that even this would gradually suffer important changes, inasmuch as what was written became less and less the true copy of a powerful, immediately operative, public speech. The writer, instead of delivering an oration, preferred in his retirement to sketch merely the thoughts and imaginations of his meditative mind ; and thought it well to secure effect by the aid of art and form. Hence finally

the visions, the sphere of which the great prophets had greatly restricted, once more occur in a more artistic form and with greater frequency than before. And then, with all its efforts, artistic literature could never supply the place of the living breath from which the ancient prophecy had proceeded ; so that this literature, which was but an imperfect remnant of a greater function, necessarily wandered ever farther from the living spring of all prophecy.

It is quite true that this prophecy, which had enjoyed centuries of development towards perfection, was too strong to decay and die all at once. At the time of the deliverance of the nation from the captivity and of the foundation of the new Jerusalem, it rapidly flourishes again and still bears rich fruit worthy of its great past history. That at that time there still existed a multitude of very active prophets, may be seen from Zech. vii. 3 ; viii. 9. ; Neh. vi. 7-14, as well as from other traces. Notwithstanding, the germ of death within was already too operative, and this autumn bloom bore no abiding fruit.—When, from the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., the nation was wholly without the public work of a prophet, many a germ and shoot of the ancient prophecy appeared in books. But the species of literature which sprang from such a source was of a character so very different from this we are now considering, that we must leave the treatment of it for a special *appendix* to this work.

Apart from these external hindrances, however, there lay, from the commencement of the third period, in the heart of prophecy itself, a probably still more powerful cause of its gradual decline, an internal cause which rendered the external causes fully destructive. This is a cause which at first sight is not pleasing, but at length becomes quite so. For it was necessary that this prophecy should finally reach its goal and exit. As we saw above, it was but one of the many forms in which the divine spirit manifests itself amongst men. The form had its necessity until the end, which it alone could attain,

had been reached. But as soon as it has attained this end, which was above explained, as soon as the multitude of truths, which could be established amongst mankind by it alone, has been actually established in eternal works, it then falls into decay by dissolution within itself and passes away, that it may leave behind only its imperishable creations. At this time it had brought to light the greatest treasures; and its own wealth stood in the way of further creations. Many older oracles were repeated in a more or less altered shape by later prophets, as if they felt that they could supply nothing better. Republications of this sort are owing to a very different cause from that which led the great prophets of the second period to repeat verbally, purposely and frankly an older oracle merely to attach to it their own reflections (Amos i. 2; Isa. ii. 2-4; ch. xv. sq.; Mic. iv. 1-4), for this is done from anything but a growing poverty which must rest content with the wealth of richer days. The fact too that the prophetic path had become so smooth and easy, to strike out which with equal truth and efficiency had cost the earlier prophets evidently such unusual struggles, was attended by important consequences. On the one hand, the prophets' hearers became more cultivated, and the prophetic style, giving up its natural vehemence, gradually assumed the didactic manner, whilst, on the other hand, a multitude of inefficient imitators could arise and gradually corrupt the most perfect form. It is true the prophets as a class had held themselves in a most wonderful way comparatively free from externalities. From the time of Elijah the class is but barely distinguished by a peculiar kind of rough clothing, consisting of a mantle and girdle (Zech. xiii. 4; 1 Kings xix. 13, 19; 2 Kings i. 8; ii. 8; Isa. xx. 2; comp. Matt. iii. 4), whilst the prophet who had no private means received at most small voluntary presents (1 Kings xiv. 3; 2 Kings iv. 42; v. 5; viii. 8, sq.; comp. Num. xxii. 7). Notwithstanding, the peculiar diction and class of literature which had been formed by the prophets, the weighty formula **נְאֻם יְהוָה**, and the like,

obtained by degrees so wide a range and such great authority, that probably many ambitious persons, in spite of their lacking all endowments, or even for evil designs, *e.g.* to flatter the great, were induced to imitate the externalities of the ancient and revered prophets. Yesaya and Mikha had in their time to contend against false prophets of Yahvé: but Yéremyá (in many passages, especially xxiii. 9-40) and Hezeqiel (ch. xiii.; comp. Neh. vi. 7-14) use wholly different language against the hosts of prophets and prophetesses and their complete degeneracy, and one prophet even goes so far as to wish that in the future no one may again arise as a prophet (Zech. xiii. 3-6).<sup>\*</sup> The people also grew ever more despairing of prophecy, and were very far from hailing it with the childish confidence of the earlier ages (Ezek. xii. 22-28). Thus at this period prophecy, as the genuine and great prophets themselves discerned, was undergoing internal dissolution; its creative vigour was broken and its form already abused from excessive employment. Its primary design had been realised, and its gradual but complete exhaustion no longer a calamity. It was necessary that a wholly different age should come, when the harvest of truths which it had brought to light received due consideration and was rightly applied, a period not of creation but of elucidation and application, a period when, living prophecy having long disappeared, even an excessive drought and dearth followed the former wealth, until at last the greatest and most enduring prophet of all came to complete the entire Old Testament. But this is not the place to speak of him.

<sup>\*</sup> Just as the word נְבוּיָה, *prophecy*, once so honourable, even denoted in the latest times almost a *lie* (Neh. vi. 12).

## II.

## THE PROPHETS AS WRITERS.

That writing was not one of the prophet's original or necessary functions follows of itself from what has been said already. Notwithstanding, at an early period certain causes might induce a prophet to fix the fleeting thoughts of an oration by means of writing. Nothing can be more instructive on this subject than the instance of Yesaya's own utterances. When his contemporaries would not comprehend and believe a great truth which he had repeatedly publicly announced, the same prophetic spirit which had urged him to speak led him then especially with its powerful command to write, that by this means he might work for his own age and preserve for all times, as a lasting testimony, that which he felt to be as true as his own life (viii. 1, 16; xxx. 8). Or if a prophet had laboured long and experienced much, he might think well, upon a review of his whole prophetic work, to perpetuate in writing the most important things in his discourses and his life, and thus leave behind him an enduring memorial for the instruction of those who were far away or near, present or to come; since a well-arranged collection of such great principles and the results of a long prophetic life might have its peculiar importance, only to mention the remarkable narrative (Jer. xxxvi.). Thus all prophetic writing (or dictation) sprang originally from the pressure of life itself, as one of the results and fruits of the prophetic calling generally. It grew into a beautiful continuation and supplement to the true prophetic work; and only by degrees, completely, in fact, not until the latest times, could it become merely literature, presupposing no public speaking and work.

The records might be of two kinds: either the concise, leading and most characteristic words of an oration, which a

prophet wrote in large letters for the people upon prominent public slabs, as inscriptions serving as monuments for every man, such as are intended Isa. viii. 1; xxx. 8 *a*; or lengthy expositions in books, the only records which have been preserved, and with which only we can deal here. Many reasons might be produced for thinking that prophetic books of this kind were really not infrequently written during the earliest period. For the sake of brevity we will confine ourselves to the following. In the book of Yôél, which itself dates from that period, the most distinctive prophetic conceptions and names are already existing, *e.g.* the important idea of the day of Yahvé, so that it is evident that Yôél merely takes up a thread of thought which had been started long ago by other prophets; earlier oracles are clearly referred to, sometimes in express words (as *Yahvé has said*, iii. 5; comp. Hos. vii. 12), at other times by the tone of the discourse (iv. 1, where the idea of redemption is presupposed). A prophet is not in the habit of quoting his own oracles in this way: the words therefore refer to well-known utterances of older prophets than Yôél; and it is most natural to suppose that they were in writing, as very soon after 'Amôs refers to the written oracles of Yôél. There is besides no reason whatever for supposing that the small book of Yôél, which alone has been preserved, was the only book which was written so early. Isa. ii. 2-4, ch. xv. sq.; Mic. iv. 1-4 (confining ourselves at present to the prophetic books of the Old Testament), fragments from the earliest period, which would otherwise have been lost, are cited. To this must be added, that the general condition of the literature of the people of Israel undoubtedly warrants the supposition, that the prophetic branch of it already flourished in these early times, as has been shown more fully in the first four volumes (three of the Germ.) of my *History of Israel*. Still, the second period, when the greatest prophets lived, was the time when this branch of literature, as well as the other branches, was at its greatest perfection, whilst in the later period it



evidently expanded itself almost too luxuriously, and became too abundant in proportion as genuine prophecy decreased.

But in whatever way a prophetic literature arose, in any case it became early enough an instrument for establishing and spreading in the world the prophetic truths, equally effective with the oral utterances and every other activity of a prophet. Quite apart from the effects it might produce throughout future ages, it became such an instrument immediately in the case of the prophets' contemporaries, for whom they primarily intended to work by the help of literature also. And if they had not distinctly felt that their authorship was a fruitful supplement of all their other efforts, they would never have bestowed the pains and art upon it which they evidently have done. The high state of development which literature must have arrived at early in Israel, and the strong love of all kinds of written productions which had become influential at an equally early period, most fortunately combine with the prophets' eagerness to lay hold of any helpful agency, to create a new species of literature, which even after the age of the prophets themselves was destined to produce the most various and important results. There is therefore no more erroneous view of this prophetic literature than that which conceives it as very imperfect and rude. On the contrary, it must have been extremely cultivated, and have exercised a wonderful charm over the first readers : although it had its favourable and unfavourable times, and its more or less perfect artists. However, we must now turn to its specific characteristics.

I. If we conceive a prophet turning from speaking to writing, we shall naturally expect that his written discourse will bear generally a likeness to his oral one. And this is confirmed by the most cursory observation. The prophet's written discourse is as animated and rapid, as telling for the moment, as discursive and resumptive, as full of surprises and effective appeals, as his oral discourse. And as the prophets when they appeared in public addressed primarily the assembled men alone,

but then might at times direct a word, at a convenient pause or at the end, to the women standing in the distance, so in their writings also occur such brief appeals to the women at the end of a longer section. (Amos iv. 1-3; Isa. iii. 16-iv. 1; xxxii. 9-13; Ezek. xiii. 17-23.)

Still, it is equally plain that the prophet's writing must bear in many respects a character considerably different from his oral discourse. The latter, although, owing to the inspired state of mind and the elevation of the prophetic thoughts, much beyond ordinary utterance, could not be so regular and finished as the written discourse, and was often probably interrupted by the objections of the hearers (comp. Isa. vii.; Jer. xiii. 12, sq.). The written report, not confined to a slavish reproduction of the words, will render the sense of what was said with greater regularity, in better order, and in many places perhaps more copiously and with greater precision. The writing down of such long orations, copious and well arranged, as are found, *e.g.* in the books of 'Amôs and Hoséa, Yesaya ch. xxviii.-xxxii. in the book of Mikha, clearly required much consideration and art. The prophet must have done this, therefore, at the call of some unusual occurrence, some time after he had been before the public, when he could command greater leisure. Accordingly the experiences which he had made in the midst of his public engagements would often flow in upon him as he wrote, and easily find their way unconsciously into his book, determining its tone and spirit. The passage, Isa. xxviii. 1, sq. supplies a lucid instance, in which all the experiences which the prophet had once made, as he surprised with his threatening words a luxurious revel of powerful scorers, are reproduced in the most vivid manner. But a book, as was said above, was often designed to collect the thoughts of several orations, delivered at various times, or even the results of a long course of prophetic labour. In this case, still greater freedom was necessary. The book then often received historical observations, as helping to clearly distinguish the recollected orations

from various periods, or aiding the understanding of the orations themselves. Such observations occur on a small scale in the books of Yôél, Hoséa, and 'Amôs, but much more at length in the larger books of Yesaya and Yéremyá. If the prophet purposed to describe his actions and conduct, as in certain cases they had been determined by prophetic feelings, it was still further necessary to use a historical garb. If, again, the occurrences, at the time of writing, already belonged to the distant past, and many prophetic words and deeds were crowded together before the eyes of the writer, a verbal reproduction was still more impracticable; the most important things had to be selected from the mass, and later experiences could more easily creep in. The books of Yéremyá and Hezeqiel show very plainly how much in that case a written production followed rather general views and any arrangement that seemed suitable than the strict order of time.

Lastly, in such works thoughts and expositions could be introduced such as had not been touched upon in the oral discourse. For certainly a genuine prophet who had been labouring for a long time had in the sanctuary of his heart more thoughts and experiences than he had ever expressed publicly, or had wished to express. But if the time comes at length for full exposition and putting upon record, his heart may then open itself more freely and pour forth its deeper secrets. Thus often there is projected before the spirit of a prophet, as he looks back upon his experiences, a new and expressive picture, as if his earlier life in the world and in Yahvé arose before him in a new brighter light and in a higher and diviner history. In this way arise noble narratives of an elevated nature, in which common experience and memory have become wonderfully united with and reconciled to divine truths and surveys, histories not of how matters happen in the world of sense, but of how they lie clearly unveiled in their inward necessity before the divine mind (Hos. i. 2-ii. 3; Zech. xi.; xiii. 7-9; 1 Kings xix. 9, sq.). This would be matter for divine

dramas, if art had laid hold upon it and worked it up ; and, in fact, gradually art attempted it, as the book of Habacqqu shows. And a prophet may review his life still further back, calling to mind the sacred moment of his first call and consecration, and at the head of his book describe the feelings which have sustained and borne his entire prophetic life from that time, Isa. vi. ; Jer. i. ; Ezek. i. 3. In the opposite direction, the prophet, when he is producing a book of some length, may make an extended survey both of his own time and of the world, and find room for much within the compass of his consideration and treatment which he could scarcely touch upon orally.

In this way writing became a spiritual renewal and fresh creation of oral discourse, a creation which, though it would certainly have been impossible unless the language of public speech had preceded it with its life and effectiveness, yet in many respects surpasses this, excelling it by virtue of its own peculiar purposes and advantages. It is, however, easy to perceive that one prophet, *e.g.* 'Amôs especially, may adhere more closely to the model of oral discourse than another, *e.g.* Hosea especially. A prophetic composition, of which there may be several in a book, is a piece of writing complete in itself, with its own plan and order. Every such composition, the most brief as well as the most lengthy, must refer, whether distinctly or by implication, *e.g.* to the future, or rather, to speak from the point of view of these prophets, to the great decisive day of Yahvé. But where this climax of a whole discourse is to find its place must depend upon the well-considered plan and structure of the composition. In the same way, any larger book is arranged with great forethought, which, although it does not slavishly adhere to the one object in view, still never wholly misses it, as when, *e.g.* the book commences with the consecration of the prophet,—the most fitting introduction,—or crowds together the Messianic prophecies, which have to be presented in grand outlines, towards

the end, or, again, brings together at a convenient place all the oracles having reference to foreign nations, and so on.

The details of all this will be best treated more fully when we come to the exposition of the books themselves which differ from each other very greatly. However, notwithstanding the great differences of the various books, there are other facts which in general hold true of them all, which it is worth while to consider at this stage. First of all, it should be observed, that it must be admitted that the prophet in the publication of his discourses was not bound to any particular time, and might send them forth in writing as soon after they were spoken as it seemed to him desirable. Thus the little book of Yôél was certainly published immediately after he had delivered the two orations of which it is composed. Still, unmistakable indications point to the conclusion that a prophet, especially if he were young, generally suffered a space of from ten to twenty years to elapse before he felt himself, for some special reason, impelled to labour for his contemporaries by means of his pen also. The clearest evidence of this is supplied by the oldest book of Yesaya's. As author also a prophet knew how to abide his time; he knew that speaking and writing are two wholly different things; and wrote his book only when he thought he heard in the state of the times the voice of God calling him to write as it had before called him to speak. But if he had once laboured successfully as a writer, it was easy for him then to go on publishing what he had said and done of importance. In the end he would bring together into a connected shape with new additions the separate compositions which he had published before, or would even publish repeatedly larger works with additions. This may be clearly seen in the books of Yesaya and Yéremyá which have been preserved. Prophetic literature became thus in the course of centuries, down to the first destruction of Jerusalem, an increasingly rich and important constituent of Hebrew

literature generally; and at least many of its most valuable productions would have entirely perished during the subsequent commotions of the kingdom and dispersion of the nation, if it had not at that time been highly cultivated throughout a long series of centuries and had not produced imperishable works. But it follows from this also, that down to that period this literature already included two very different classes of writings: (1) shorter books, as the prophets had originally published them, *e.g.* the books of Amôs, Mikha, ch. i.-v.; Ssefanya, Habacquq, etc.; (2) longer works, generally last editions of a prophet's earlier writings, as the books of Yéremyá and Hezeqiel. To these might be added (3) various extracts and single selected passages from them, which gradually came into circulation, as we shall see further on.

But in the really artistic plan of these works, even of those of a smaller but especially of larger size, a custom became increasingly common in the course of these centuries, which no less shows how magnificently this entire literature flourished. Thus since the time of Yesaya no work of any size could appear which did not contain some oracles referring to foreign nations: so that by and by Ssefanya's short book even followed the example. What the general plan of large books was, is most plainly shown to us by the books of Yéremyá and Hezeqiel. And Hezeqiel's book is also on this account so instructive that it is manifestly the last that issued from the legitimate development of this entire prophetic literature. What was afterwards produced in the time of the restoration of Jerusalem, never attained again the artistic grandeur and perfection of the earlier works, important as many of these later works were in point of matter.

II. How truly prophetic literature developed its own peculiar form, appears most clearly when its nature and features, its origin and constituents, are minutely examined. It is true that the prophet is by no means limited to one form of composi-

tion. As appears from what has been said above, he employs the ordinary style for the historical parts of his work, and on the other hand his language at certain points rises to song, single verses in purely poetical language breaking in upon the prose (see p. 43), whilst later writers, who write at a greater distance from actual life, interweave even songs of some length, as Hab. iii. 3-15, or as we see in the case of Hezeqiel, ch. xxxii., and the book of Isa. ch. xl.-lxvi.

Still, in both cases, this is the exception ; and the prophetic style, which, as the reproduction or copy of solemn oral discourse, must form the broad basis of a prophetic book, has a peculiar form of its own. On the one hand, it is too exalted in subject-matter and spirit to permit it to sink to the level of common prose ; but, on the other hand, too essentially intended to produce immediate effect upon the affairs of life to suffer it to depart so far from these as is allowable in the case of the purely poetic style. Accordingly, it oscillates in such a manner between prose and poetry, that, in its inward aims and effort, it rises to the height of poetry, whilst in its external form it adopts freer and common habits, in order that it may produce effect more immediately upon life, and also retain the peculiar wealth and adaptiveness of oratory. The prophetic style owes its peculiar form entirely to the combination of these two instinctive aims ; and its difference from the strictly poetic style is felt most perceptibly when the two styles are brought into juxtaposition, as Hab. iii. Prophetic discourse is always in this form ; and it is observed throughout in particulars, such as the formation of words and of sentences, and the management of the various parts of each discourse. Still it is of the nature of such a hybrid style that it will rise to the height of pure poetry oftener in the case of one prophet than in the case of another. The form in which we meet with it in books is certainly essentially the same as that in which it was spoken, especially in the form of the words and the sentences, save that, when written, it received in all

respects a more compact and symmetrical finish.\* It also became so firmly established that even writing that had had no oral origin often adopted its form, until at last, in the hands of writers who rarely or never spoke in public, it lost its fresh colour and genuine life; and, partly owing to the unwieldiness of the subject, as, *e.g.* in the long visions of Hezeqiel, ch. xl., sq., sank more and more into prose.

1. In the matter of *language* the prophetic style manifests less preference for the external forms which distinguish the language of poetry from that of prose.† It is true the language of prophecy follows, generally speaking, the history and the changes of the poetic language, so that from the seventh century it also displays a liking for the brevity and neatness of the poetry of this period,‡ *e.g.* in the case of Yéremyá. Nevertheless a number of words and forms which most clearly distinguish the language of poetry from that of prose, *e.g.* the *-î* of the *stat. c.*, forms such as אֱלֹהִים for אֱלֹהִים, the name אֱלֹהִים or אֱלֹהִים, for *God*, are either not found in the prophetic language at all, or but seldom, and only owing to special reasons, as, for instance, the *-î* of the *stat. c.*, Isa. i. 21, because in this passage a kind of song is struck up, אֱלֹהִים, Joel i. 15, only on account of a *paronomasia*; whilst still in the case of oracles which had a purely literary origin, this rule was early transgressed, Num. xxiii. sq.; and the later prophets also, as authors, revive many a word that had become antiquated (as that word אֱלֹהִים, Ezek. i. 24; x. 5).

Apart from this greater external ornament, the prophetic language has all the wealth and elevation of that of poetry. Although it commences its announcements in the form of prose, *e.g.* thus saith Yahré (for an announcement of this sort is very rarely more intimately interwoven into the poetic and

\* The more exalted prose of the Arabians is very similar, which also occurs in a spoken form in solemn discourse, *e.g.* from the pulpit, the most beautiful examples of which are the older Suras of the Koran, comp. *Gr. Ar.* § 777.

† Comp. *Die Dichter des A. B. I.* a. p. 206, sq.

‡ Comp. *ibid.*, p. 27, sq.



rhetorical commencement, Zech. ix. 1; Isa. ix. 7, sq., further in the prophecies of a more purely poetical character, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, sq.; Num. xxiv. 3, sq.), and often sinks again into prose in the course, or at the end, of the whole, with such observations as *saiith Jahvé*, yet, whenever it takes freer flight, it naturally assumes the wealth and strength of genuine poetic language. But the rhetorical aim is not thereby forgotten: as a consequence of which must be considered the frequent plays upon words and thoughts, which never find so proper a place as in oral discourse, the object of which is to strike and convince at the moment. This is the case whether the play is especially confined to the sound of the words, or is occasioned only by the contrast of their meanings.\* In strictly lyrical poetry, *paronomasia* would be quite out of place; for the object of a lyric is not to produce surprise, it lives and moves alone in its own joyous or sad feelings. Only when rhetoric finds a place by the side of poetry, in the drama, *e.g.* may this artifice be employed with effect, as Canticles† and Job show. It may also produce an agreeable effect in connexion with the incisiveness of a proverb.‡ But the paronomasia is most natural to the prophetic style, it being the imitation or copy of public discourse; and there is no discourse of any length in which this artifice does not suddenly appear with its rapid and effective incisiveness, surprising and enchaining the hearers. It occurs even in discourse which is of the nature of a lamentation, Joel i. 15; Isa. xv. sq. But the greatest prophets in all cases make use of it only when it is fitting, when

\* Of the first kind is, *e.g.*, the sentence עֲנִיָּה עֲנָתוֹת: as if we said in German, *Todt ist schon Anathoth*, Isa. x. 30, the sentence, נִדְדָה מִדְּמִנָּה, as well, although, in this case, the similarity of the sounds is less perceptible; the next sentence, on the other hand, יֹשְׁבֵי הַגְּבִים הָעֵיִו, *the inhabitants of Gebim* (*i.e.*, literally cisterns, where could be found secrecy and security) *make to flee*, retains only a play on the meanings; comp. further a clear instance of the latter kind, Isa. xxx. 7. A similar example of both kinds together, Amos v. 5.

† Comp. the *Dichter des A. Bs.* II. p. 352, 2nd ed. Further, Job xi. 12; xiii. 12.

‡ But in this connexion only in late authors, comp. the *Dichter des A. Bs.* II p. 287.

the thought itself irresistibly leads to it, and it is able, with one blow, to finish off a complete and lengthy exposition. Yesaya may be referred to as a model in this respect also; whilst the prophet, Isa. xv. sq., although for us he is ancient, is the first who observes far less moderation and calculation of effect in the employment of this artifice; which is still more the case with his successors Mikha and several other later writers, who employ it in long series without a break, and thereby weaken, in fact, the effect. The plays upon names of places could be most easily continued in a longer series, as if to enliven somewhat such a dry list of names, Amos v. 5; Isa. xv. sq.; x. 29-31; Mic. i.; Zeph. ii. 4-6. But since paronomasia is in all cases so characteristic a mark of the genuine form and life of prophetic discourse, it follows, as a matter of course, that it ought to be expressed in the translation with as much ease and naturalness as is possible.\*

2. The *movement* and *beat* of the discourse is equally *rythmical* with that of strict poetry, so that we have here almost a complete recurrence of the laws of poetical rhythm;† indeed, inasmuch as the external ornament of the words in the case of the greatest prophets especially is less than in the language of the poets, the roll of the rhythm is so much the more a distinctive feature of the prophetic style. Very often, therefore, a thought breaks up into the two members of a verse in such a way that the one member gives no complete sense without the other, which in certain cases is very observable, and to observe which is often of great importance in gathering the true meaning, Isa. iii. 12; v. 17; xi. 7, 14; xvi. 5; xxi. 14; xlviii. 10; Jer. iv. 15; Ezek. vii. 26. And when a similar, or even the same, word is repeated in another member, often there is notwithstanding a slight change in the expression, if only in the

\* But modern readers have often wrongly taken quite accidental coincidence of sounds for intended plays upon words, not considering that a genuine pun must play with the thought as well as the word. Comp. *Berliner Jahrb. für w. K.*, stück I.

† *Die Dichter des Alten Bundes*, Ia. p. 107, sq.

sound, or should only the person and the suffix be changed (if the sense admits different forms and person-endings) Amos v. 16, (Jer. ix. 16) ; Isa. xv. 3, 7 ; xvi. 3 ; xxi. 11 ; xxiii. 13 (where the suffix is changed three times, because the sense really admits of three different suffixes, which still ultimately point to the same thing) ; Jer. vi. 23 ; ix. 16 ; although a great prophet like Yesaya has no need in all cases scrupulously to consider such minute ornamentation of an otherwise audible rhythm of members.

It is not less clearly observable that the rhythm makes considerable and beautiful changes in accordance with the tone and feeling of the discourse. Thus the uneven three-membered rhythm is introduced with great effect where the discourse is maintained at a proud height, as it were, as for the purpose of allaying the excited heat of the imagination, (Isa. iv. 2-5 ; ix. 5, sq. ; xxx. 25, sq. ; xix. 18 ; Mic. iv. 7-9 ; v. 4-7), whilst a short compact verse, following an excited passage, prepares beautifully its rapid decline and close, Mic. v. 8. However, the most various rhythms succeed each other in every verse merely in accordance with the feeling of the moment, and a fixed law was never framed and carried out.

What especially distinguishes the prophetic from the purely poetic rhythm, giving it a somewhat peculiar shape, is its possible expansion and length. The prophetic rhythm cannot get rid of the rhetorical character which created it. The free oration which is to take effect upon others must have greater volume and breadth, stronger emphasis, and an easier repetition of its thoughts and words, than the purely poetic style : and thus that verse-rhythm which, in accordance with the general law, is capable of the widest extension and the most various application, became the prophetic verse-rhythm. Verses with two or three short members are rare here : the most common structure of verse is that with extended members, which is also permissible in poetry ;\* neither are verses with three such long

\* See *Die Dichter des A. B. Ia.* p. 120, sq.

members, each of which is equal to two or three short members, rare, as Isa. xxxiii. 15,  $A B C = a b, c d, e f$ , v. 20  $a B C$ . But here is the limit: the prophetic verse is permitted as little as the poetic to expand itself indefinitely. Where this law is transgressed, as B. Isa. 1. 2, the fault is to be ascribed only to the Massôretic division of verses.

Verses of one member, or very short verses similar to them, are found in the prophets of the first and second periods, but only at the commencement and the close of a passage, or in other cases at a small pause, a poetic law,\* which even the later prophets generally observe, Jer. v. 30; vi. 2; verses scarcely broken into members and gradually sinking into prose, are just beginning to make their appearance at the time of Yéremyá, Jer. vii. 33; Zech. xii. 11.

Although, however, it may be proved in the case of the purely poetic books that they were originally written in members,† there is no trace of such a form of writing in the case of the prophetic books, so that one is driven to the conclusion that the ancients definitely distinguished also in this respect prophetic literature from poems properly so called.‡ Although modern German translators have written the prophetic verse in regularly divided members, exactly like the poetic, they have therein introduced an innovation which destroys a distinction which the ancients considered essential, as well as a form alien to the prophetic words. A more simple indication of the verse-members by perpendicular lines and the usual stops is therefore used in this work in preference; which has the further advantage of saving much space in the type.

3. Lastly, a species of *strophe* was very prevalent, just as a strophic structure pervades the whole body of Hebrew poetry.§ A close examination and accurate knowledge of all existing prophetic compositions leads to this conclusion, which is a truth

\* Ibid. p. 115, sq.

† Ibid. p. 133, sq.

‡ In exactly the same way as the semi-poetic style of the Arabians (see above, p. 68) is never written like poems in the form of rhyme.

§ See *Dichter des A. B.* p. 134, sq.

of highest importance for the correct view of the whole subject as well as for the elucidation of matters of detail ; and looking at the matter from an *a priori* point of view, there is not the slightest difficulty in supposing the use of such strophes in prophetic literature. For as certainly as the prophetic style endeavours to rise in language and verse to the poetic, and is a freer imitation of the latter, so also it might seek to assimilate to it in this last characteristic also ; especially as probably every great prophet was also a poet and understood music. It is also conceivable that in the earlier period some musical performance was introduced, either by the prophet himself or by his attendant, during the public delivery of the oration, at every pause and after each strophe, as the public reciters still do in those countries.\* That in the earliest times music played an important part, as an exciting accompaniment, in the case of the prophets also, is a known fact ;† and sometimes even the prophetic discourse changes into a song, and then again recovers itself, Isa. v. 1-3. If in this way the employment of strophes had been thrown open to the prophetic oral delivery, we cannot be surprised if the corresponding literature took possession of the strophic structure and gave it a more regular form. As a fact this structure has taken a somewhat different form in prophetic compositions from that of the poetic : it has not remained so fresh and animated, so multiform and ever new, as in poetry, but has become much more uniform and less versatile.

The symmetrical structure of strophes is most common : and observing this symmetry we have : (1) verses arranged in twos, or at most threes, forming quite short oracles of two strophes each, Isa. xiv. 29-32 ; xxi. 13-17 ; or of one strophe, xxi. 11, sq. Or, on a larger scale, verses in threes, extending through two or three strophes, Jer. xlvi. 3-7 ; xlv. 3-12 ; through four strophes, of which one has at present but two verses, Isa. xvii. 1-11 ; further from a special cause (which will soon appear), through

\* Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 116.

† 1 Sam. x. 5 ; 2 Kings iii. 15.

seven strophes, of which only a few have two verses, Amos i. 3—ii. 5 ; through five strophes very accurately, Hab. ii. 6 B—20 ; through four strophes of which one has four verses, Zeph. iii. 8-20. We may call these species the *small strophes*; they are employed only in short compositions. (2) Verses arranged in fours or at most fives, according to the Massoretic divisions, extending through three strophes, Zeph. ii. 4-15 ; through four strophes, Isa. ix. 7—x. 4 ; through five strophes, Mic. ii. sq. ; Mal. i. 2—ii. 9 ; on a larger scale verses in fives, extending through three strophes (of which only one has four verses), Isa. xxiii. 1-14 ; or fluctuating between 4-5, extending through four strophes, Hos. ch. iv. ; through five, Hos. v. 1—vi. 11 ; and between 4-6 through four strophes, Zech. xi. 1—xiii. 6 ; and again similarly ch. xiv. We call these kinds the *medium strophes* ; they are found in pieces of a medium length, especially when the style of the passage which they compose is animated. (3) The great or *long strophe* is constituted by the combination of either three small or two medium strophes, by which means one strophe is formed containing mostly 7-8 verses, being sometimes somewhat larger, but rarely contracted to six verses. This form of strophe is exceedingly frequent ; in fact, we must say that it is the proper prophetic strophe, since it possesses the considerable space in which the great thoughts of the prophet most freely find vent. It is found as early as Yôél and ‘Amôs sufficiently formed, appears as early as Hoséa carried out regularly on a large scale, ch. vii.-xiv., in Yesaya and almost all the other prophets it decidedly predominates, and is still found in Yéremyá and in yet later prophets. It admits of any number of strophes, and is also found in the solitary one that is left, as Isa. vii. 18-25. How this form of strophic structure first arose from a firmer combination of shorter strophes, may still be observed most clearly in such ancient pieces as Isa. xv., xvi. 7-12 ; and in many passages in Hos. ch. vii.-xiv. The last strophe of every kind is often cramped, or shortened, as if from weariness ; just as the same thing occurs in lyrics.

As the last strophe may be somewhat shorter, it may also sometimes be a little longer, when the whole purport of the discourse leads up to it and only in it attains its culmination : an instance of which we have in the piece, Isa. ch. vi., with its three strophes of medium length. There is less ground for classifying either of these cases with strophes of an unsymmetrical structure. Still, this unsymmetrical strophic structure is formed when the meaning and plan of the discourses from the first leads to it. Thus some traces of the *waning* (*sinkende*) strophic structure have been retained from the genuine Hebrew form of the elegy, not only in the book of Hezeqiel, who in that respect imitates more purely poetical examples,\* but unmistakably in the book of Yôél, in the first four strophes of the discourse which is the first of his which have been preserved, i. 2-12. But from the earliest times, evidently the *waxing* (*steigende*) strophic structure, in which each successive strophe increases in length, was very peculiarly the prophet's : it suits admirably when the excited thought can find vent only in ever growing circles, the storm of the feelings and the effect must be more and more powerful. Thus the elegy even of Yôél is transformed at the end almost entirely into this storm-discourse, i. 2—ii. 17, and a perfect example of it is supplied in the passage, Isa. v. 8-24. Yet this structure is no longer common : it is significant that the symmetrical strophic structure is already by far the prevalent structure in the prophets.

On the other hand, the structure in which the strophes are *recurrent*, having a similar commencement or a similar end, are more natural to and common in the prophets than in the poets, since the former have peculiarly the mission to follow out a truth in many directions and to give prominence to what is kindred and eternal under varying forms. Often the recurrence is very observably shown in whole sentences. Amos i. 3—ii. 4 ; iv. 6-11 ; Isa. ix. 7—x. 4 ; often not expressed so strongly in the

\* See the *Dichter des A. B. Ia.* p. 152.

words and yet manifestly lying in the meaning of the passage as in a *recurrent oration* (*rundrede*), Hab. ii. 6 b-20; Ezek. xxxii. 20-32; and most beautifully associated with the waxing strophic structure, Isa. v. 8-24.\*

These different forms of strophic structure may be complicated, so that, for instance, in the waxing structure the final strophe, which becomes too lengthy to form one whole, is resolved again into smaller strophes of the symmetrical structure, Mic. ii., sq. And what is specially important, there can be added to a series of symmetrical strophes, forming the main portion of the piece, an introduction, or also a conclusion of a peculiar character and of another length, as Hab. ch. ii.; Amos i. 2; Hos. i. 2—ii. 3; Isa. v. 25; ix. 7—x. 4; v. 26-30; Zeph. ii. 1—iii. 7. But if the prophet had before him matter of great extent and variety to deal with, he might also dismember it into several larger sections, each of which fell into the special form of strophe which was most suitable for it. Thereby the entire prophetic form of writing passes into quite a new stage, in which the simple model of oral discourse gets more and more neglected and purely poetic art tends to prevail. The piece, Isa. xxviii.—xxxii., supplies an example of artistic style which has not left the basis of really prophetic orations: but in what way this artistic style could become more and more purely poetical, will shortly appear more clearly.

These are some of the main characteristics of the structure of the prophetic strophes. The more accurate our knowledge of the prophetic writings becomes, with the greater certainty we shall comprehend how deeply this articulation, which is so magnificently suitable, pervades them from first to last. Even such pieces as Hos. ii. 4-25, or B. Zech. xi., in which, on first examination, one would scarcely discover such an articulation, turn out finally, the more thoroughly they are examined, to be well articulated in conformity with the above general laws, How naturally, with this general tendency to strophic struc-

\* Comp. *Die Dichter des A. B. Ia.* p. 191, sq.; 198, sq.



ture, the treatment of a subject falls into beautiful symmetry similar to it, is clearly seen in the fact that even a series of successive visions or signs readily conform to it, Amos vii. 1-9; Hos. i. 3-9. And there is no stronger proof of the existence of the strophic structure than that towards the end of a strophe, which is likely to become overladen and too long, the thoughts are often manifestly compressed and hasten to a conclusion, Isa. x. 5-15; but, on the other hand, in one instance, they are remarkably drawn out to fill up the proper measure, xxxii. 1-8. Even a prophet and writer like Yéremyá, of such an entirely simple nature, conforms to the primary laws of this structure of the prophetic discourses. It is Hezeqiel first, and the later Haggái and Zakharya, who observe it less strictly, although Hezeqiel still everywhere keeps within its laws, especially when his language grows more elevated. But even when these later prophets, who have become generally rather authors than speakers, depart from this structure, they only give greater freedom to its stricter laws without entirely abandoning it. Thus, in the first place, they permit their writings to fall into greater or smaller sections, which, at least distantly, still adhere to the proportions of the prophetic strophes, and never transgress too far beyond them; and, secondly, they clearly separate these sections by such insertions as *and Yahvé said*, whilst the earlier prophets insert such notes only rarely, and then for some special reason.\* But many of the latest prophetic writers, who, in respect of age, come far behind the prophets of the Old Testament, still follow, in very essential points, the ancient law of the strophic structure, notwithstanding that many modern artifices had been added.†

\* As Isa. iii. 16, because at this strophe the discourse really takes a decided turn in quite a different direction; and the prophet would indicate that what follows was originally rather an independent discourse.

† This may be seen most clearly in the *Fourth Book of Esra*, as I have shown in the restoration of it in the essay upon it (Göttingen, 1863).

III. But how vigorously every form of prophetic literature was cultivated may be further most clearly seen by a closer consideration of the very different species into which it was split up in the course of centuries ; and these species are characterised, as we can still partially but certainly enough discern, by the various designations which we must more particularly examine.

1. The simplest designation of a prophetic piece is **דְּבַר יְהוָה** *word of Yahvé*, according to p. 9 ; and this name has an importance also for the whole literature, inasmuch as any prophetic writing whatever may be so denominated. For all that a prophet, should it be throughout a longer period or even his whole life, had spoken, is after all, taken as a whole, simply *the word of Yahvé*, and may be best estimated only as such a whole. Hence we find this designation as the name of a book placed not only before the book of Ssefanya, but also before the books of Hosea and Mikha, which, nevertheless, as even these headings testify, contain discourses of the prophets during the reigns of several kings. When the prophet himself is referred to, what he has spoken, if he laboured for some length of time and in various ways, is actually denominated *words* in the plural, as the books of Yéremyá and 'Amôs show ; but it is another thing when the reference is to the ultimate and perennial source from which, especially after the death of the prophet, his words are conceived to flow.

Another and somewhat more modern name for essentially the same idea, is, according to p. 32, sq., **חֲזִיוֹן** : this word gradually comes to represent exactly the same meaning, because, like the former term, it may also, as the name of a book, denote the prophetic contents of an entire book, or of a chief section of it,\* and in this way enjoys the special advantage that it can be prefixed in the construct state before the name of a prophet as the author of the book or the section, carrying with it the idea of prophecy, and thus

\* Only in this case it is carefully distinguished from **חֲזִיוֹן**, according to § 163 d.

includes in it the two words **יְהוָה יִבְרַךְ**; and the headings of the books of Yesaya, 'Obadya and Nahum have this usage. But it is in any case remarkable, that, as supplying the more modern idea of a *vision*, which might easily have given to it a magnificent and boastful meaning, it is clearly intentionally avoided with all its derivatives by Yéremyá, in conformity with his simple taste.\* But he is alone in this.

Inasmuch as these two terms covered the same meaning in the course of time, there might be effected such fresh fusings into one as we have in the heading of Isa. ii. 1, which briefly announces **הַדְבָר** *the word*, because by the following *which Yesaya saw*, it is sufficiently indicated, this being the most distinctive prophetic expression, that the above *Yahvé-word* only was intended.

2. As something special and distinct from the general *Yahvé-word* gradually arises the prophetic piece called **מִשָּׁנָה**. But this name is in itself so doubtful, that we should have been able to form a much less safe opinion as to its original meaning, if there had not been preserved the passage, Zech. ix. 1, which, correctly understood, throws the clearest light upon it. It is true, the word appears in this passage at the head of the discourse, but nevertheless closely interwoven with its texture, as will be shown more fully when we come to the passage itself. Since, therefore, in this passage, a prophetic word against a far-off land takes its rise, as if, exalted upon the wings of the wind, it will fly thither to alight there with its burden, and to strike everything that it is intended to strike,—it begins to announce itself thus, *the flight of the Yahvé-word unto Chadrak's land, and Damascus is its resting-place, i.e. hear how it rises aloud, and how with the wings of the wind it will fly thither as to its goal!* There are two distinctions to

\* In Jer. xiv. 14; xxiii. 16, the word is used in reference to evil prophets; and all this must be considered in order to understand the peculiar tone of the words with which he begins his book, i. 1, sq. It is true the word is found in Lam. ii. 9, 14, but that is only another proof that this book was not written by Yéremyá.

be observed here. On the one hand, a prophetic oracle may begin in such a way that it proclaims at once, as in poetic elevation, its main aim, and how it rises to attain it, in order that, having accomplished the right start by this first bound, it may unfold itself further.\* On the other hand,† it is in the passage before us, and in other similar instances, especially a literally distinct land and nation, which, in an unusual manner, is the object aimed at by the Yahvé-word. Here the Yahvé-word rises and propels itself, as with uncommon exertion, to make itself heard in a quarter where it is not readily heard, redoubles, as it were, its energies, takes wing, and propels itself as high as possible. In fact, however, a Yahvé-word referring to a foreign land and people must always, in many respects, take a very peculiar form of its own. Such words of God addressed to foreign nations became more and more frequent among the prophets of Israel, as was observed above, pp. 38, 64; but just as they are very peculiar in their subject-matter, so have they very frequently a peculiar style. Whatever shall be heard afar must go forth in as free and as attractive, but also in as brief, a form as possible. And in fact, all these pieces are compressed, but extremely energetic and telling, in the choicest and most striking words. It is in Jer. xlviii. and Hez. xxvi.—xxxii., that we first meet with longer pieces. It is a further peculiarity of these oracles that but very few of them were originally oral discourses; and in proportion as they were from the first written productions, they could assume a more artistic character. But this word was applied prophetically at an earlier period also, and with reference to other subjects.‡

\* Just as many of the Suras of the Qorân begin in a similar way. Ps. cii. 1 is similar in poetry.

† A very similar, but in the construction of the words different, sentence, is Isa. ix. 7, comp. with Isa. xiv. 28.

‡ Namely, as a brief threat which was *lifted up* or *raised over* some one, 2 Kings ix. 25. One must proceed from this somewhat different construction and meaning. The correct feeling of the sense of the word is still evident in the headings, B. Zech. xii. 1; Mal. i. 1, as will be shown below.

Meanwhile there was formed, from other incentives, a new artistic species of this ancient Yahvé-word, which, from the very first, was employed only for literary objects, and gained firm footing in the related territory of didactic poetry. A piece of this kind, being of a prophetic character and a sort of serious, didactic poem, was called, according to the above word, B. Zech. ix. 1, a *Massa*, or, as we may most suitably render it, a *hochspruch*, *high-oracle*, if *flugspruch*, *fly-oracle*, appears too hard. Thus, in the seventh and the sixth centuries, every oracle against a foreign nation was commonly distinguished by this name, and the brief phrase was used, *Massa of Babel*, *of Moab*, *i.e.* in reference to Babel, Moab, &c. But other prophetic pieces, arranged with greater and new art, and circulated at once in a written form, also bore this name, as we shall presently see more at length; and we have elsewhere shown\* how the gnomic or didactic poetry sought, at that period, reinvigoration by its use. It cannot be proved that Yesaya<sup>a</sup> and his contemporaries used the word in this artistic sense; but at the time of Yéremyá the literature associated with this new name and idea had already sunk so low by abuse that this stern man of God desires that its use may be quite given up,<sup>†</sup> and himself never uses it, in which respect Hezeqiel follows him.

3. The book of Habaquq is designated in its heading by this name of a prophetic piece of modern art; and that there was a reason for this has already been observed. But this little book may also show us that prophetic literature carried the great freedom which it had once acquired to a much greater extent, inasmuch as poetic art entered into an increasingly close alliance with it. For the prophecy of the little book Habaquq is arranged and executed entirely like a drama of a higher, *i.e.* divine, species, as will be further explained

\* *Die Dichter des A. Bs.* p. 251.

† Jer. xxiii. 30-40, comp. thereupon *infra*. We saw above, how, in Yéremyá, the avoidance of the use of 𐤓𐤕𐤕 and its derivatives is connected with this.

below;\* and we have a similar production, though upon a much smaller scale, of an entirely dramatic character in the piece, B. Mikha, vi. sq., leaving quite out of view isolated and unusually vivid introductions of alternating voices which have found their way into longer prophetic books only incidentally and here and there, as Hos. xiv. and B. Isa. lxiii. 1-6; for these two passages are only as the highest summits to which a longer oration rises at the end almost involuntarily.† But inasmuch as prophetic literature had been developed in the last age of the ancient kingdom to this purest art of completely dramatic pieces, it showed most clearly that, before the destruction of Jerusalem, it had passed through all the stages possible to it, and that there was hardly anything left for it further to attempt.

IV. As, then, the entire prophetic literature had been so exceedingly active many centuries before, and then again a considerable time after, the destruction of Jerusalem, it may be readily presumed that words and thoughts of the older prophets, in proportion to their age, will be variously resuscitated by more recent prophets, and in proportion to their distance from the older ones, and will be repeated in a more or less altered form. And as a fact we find this (as will be shown particularly below) so variously and plainly confirmed, that the accurate observation and estimate of the *prophetic repetitions and re-echoes* becomes one important means of ascertaining with certainty the age of a prophet.

A prophet who, either with a definite object in view, repeats purposely the words of a predecessor, or in whose writing the words of earlier prophets are involuntarily re-echoed, is on that account no imitator, and may not be looked upon as such. To this extent, therefore, all the prophets until the

\* Comp. also *Die Dichter des A. Bs.* Ia p. 83, sq.

† It is, in any case, remarkable that the short passage of the late prophet, B. Isa. lxiii. 1-6, according to the correct view of all the words in ch. xl.-lxvi., concludes the real book, just as Hos. xiv. ends that of the ancient prophet.

destruction of Jerusalem must be considered as entirely independent authors, although indications multiply showing what a vast influence the earlier prophets exercised increasingly with the course of time. We have here again another proof of the exceeding importance of the fact, that the prophets before all things laboured in the very centre of the life of the nation as speakers, and only laboured secondarily as authors ; for the author is more prone to become an imitator of words and thoughts than the speaker. It is the new race of prophets which arose suddenly towards the end of the Babylonian captivity who were the first to weave many passages of older prophets into their own writings, and artistically reproduce them ; but they had not laboured publicly as the earlier prophets had done, and had, from the very first, more of the character of prophetic writers. However, the prophets from this period generally never rose again to the independent vigour of the earlier ones.

But a special kind of prophetic piece forms here an exception all the more remarkable. These are the oracles in reference to foreign nations above referred to (p. 80). Already the older, and indeed the most independent prophet-authors, did not scruple to introduce these, more or less altered, into their own writings, Yesaya doing it, and once openly enough acknowledging it, xvi. 13, sq. There must, therefore, be special causes at work here, and we are able to discover them with sufficient certainty. We must bear in mind that, although certain of these prophets, as Elisha, Yona, and others, became acquainted with several foreign nations by travelling and labouring amongst them, often staying in their midst as Apostles at that early period, yet the majority of the prophets remained all their days in one of the two kingdoms of Israel, and had but few opportunities of becoming personally acquainted with foreign peoples. Yesaya, *e.g.* displays in his writings an astonishing acquaintance with many of the peculiarities of foreign nations, yet it cannot be shown that he ever was absent

from Jerusalem. What, therefore, a prophet of this kind uttered with reference to a foreign people, could be derived only from a general view of its character, and was also generally expressed with much greater brevity than what was said with reference to Israel. Thus, in the centuries that preceded the destruction of the Davidic kingdom, foreign nations rose before the minds of the prophets only as distant, almost lifeless, pictures, on the whole exhibiting no change; and precisely the nearest nations, as Edom, Moab, Egypt, had become since the days of David and still earlier times, as it were fixed and standing figures in the eyes of Israel. When, therefore, a nation of this type experienced afresh such important events that a prophet felt called upon to speak with respect to it (and generally he spoke in this case less frequently than wrote, according to p. 80), it appeared to him that what one or another of the earlier prophets had spoken with reference to the same people was only confirmed anew, and thus it was natural for him to repeat with more or less verbal accuracy what they had uttered. As a matter of fact, the general condition of these nations, especially with regard to Israel, underwent very few changes during those centuries; whilst the truth and force of what earlier and recognised prophets of Israel had written with regard to one or the other of them, came from time to time upon these occasions into fresh and vivid remembrance. It is especially Yesaya's incidental oracle, xvi. 13, sq., which authorises us thus to view this matter, and not to find in these repetitions anything like a deficiency of independent and original genius. Furthermore, it makes a difference whether an ancient passage of this kind is simply repeated or repeated with a remark upon the reasons of its repetition (as Isa. xv. sq.; xxi. 11, sq.), or is reproduced with new additions (as Isa. xxi. 13-17; Jer. xlviii. and 'Obadya). We must at all events carefully observe this difference in our exegesis.



## III.

## THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT KANON.

As it appears, therefore, from all that we have seen, that the prophetic literature passed through a process of high and specific development, so also it is not less certain that, amongst all species of ancient Hebrew literature, it was the most prominent and characteristic; and that also, after it had once arisen (for it is far from being the oldest species of this literature), it became rapidly, in the course of a few centuries, very extensive, and at that period was manifestly the most flourishing. The spirit of that ancient people, which before all other nations had a prophetic mission, obtained in this literature for the first time its most distinct expression and its purest revelation, to as great an extent as it could find exposition and immortality in books.

Accordingly, in the present Kanon of the Old Testament, the prophetic books occupy an important place. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that, for that reason, the existing pieces of this literature in the Old Testament are all that was possessed by this ancient nation, or that these have been all preserved in their original state.

I. How comparatively small the existing collection of these books is in comparison with the real extent of the prophetic literature of the nation, may be deduced from many indications. For brevity's sake, without bringing together in this place the proofs from the historical books, we can bring proof from the prophets themselves, even if we do no more than accurately note how the particular pieces are related to older ones which are not preserved. For it appears that every prophet from whom we have writings appeals to earlier prophets, whose active labours and books accordingly we can

for the most part only pre-suppose as necessarily existing, but not prove and pursue into particulars. Thus Yôél, as was above remarked, pre-supposes writings of earlier prophets; Amos i. 2, refers to Yôél; Hosea vii. 12; viii. 14, refers to passages unknown to us; Isa. xv. sq. is, as the prophet himself notifies, older; Isa. ii. 2-4; Mic. iv. 1-4, both cite at length the same words from an older piece not preserved elsewhere; in Isa. xxvii. remains of many older pieces lie hidden; Isa. lvi. 10—lvii. 11, even a very long fragment must have been introduced unaltered from an older piece; 'Obadya and Yéremyá make use of the same oracle against Edom of an older unknown prophet; and many other proofs of the same kind might be produced. If one follows indications of this sort only, the presumption must be arrived at that there is at the back of the existing remains an extensive literature, of which there have been preserved to us but as it were a few blossoms from a large tree.

If we take a general survey of all the remains that we now possess, with respect to their different ages, we find that the number of them belonging to each of the above-mentioned three periods is very unequal. While from the first period have been preserved only the small book of Yôél, and a few fragments that had found their way into later books; from the second, the golden period of this literature, very many, and the most valuable, pieces have been preserved, such as in internal worth exceed all the rest; while, again, it is from the third and last period that the largest number (leaving out of view the books that we assign to the *Appendix*) are derived. With respect to age, the facts are much the same as in the collection of lyrics in the Old Testament—the Psalter—with this special difference only, that lyrics have been preserved from a still earlier age, inasmuch as poetry and its commitment to writing, from its very nature precedes in time, considerably at all events, the developed stage of prophecy and prophetic literature. But this phenomenon is intelligible only upon the

supposition, that, at the time when the present collection of prophetic books of the Old Testament was in formation, the earlier books had been lost, that the older they were the more commonly was this the case, and only the more important parts of them had been rescued.

II. When the Kanon of the prophetic books, strictly so-called, was founded, four larger books, almost equal in size, were received into it, the books of Yéremyá, Hezeqiel, Yesaya, and the collection of twelve other prophets. The position of the book of Daniel (which was not received into this Hebrew Kanon of prophetic writings) will be considered particularly in the Appendix to this work.

Of these four larger books, that of Hezeqiel only had been preserved up to the time when it was received into the collection exactly as it left the prophet's own hand. And in this respect this book is of extreme importance, because it gives us the clearest evidence of the manner in which a prophet himself wrote his books, and what a clear, unaltered plan might be observed through an entire work of this kind. The book of Yéremyá has also been preserved pretty much as the prophet himself finally published it, and the original form of it is still recognisable. Nevertheless, the comparison of the Hebrew text and the Alexandrian version (of which below) is alone sufficient to show with what great freedom ancient readers treated such books, rearranging them according to their own ideas. On the other hand the two other books, those which alone contain precisely the oldest and most valuable pieces, must have passed through far more changes and vicissitudes before they took their present form. And it may have been the feeling, that only the books of Yéremyá and Hezeqiel have been preserved in a more original, complete form, that was the cause to which they owed, according to the Talmudic reports, the position they once generally held—namely, before the book of Yesaya and the book of the twelve minor prophets. We are no longer in a position to follow, under the guiding of external testimony, the

history of these two books, the subject-matter of which belongs for the most part to the best period of prophecy; yet if we consider on all sides with due accuracy and acumen the various headings they contain, and attentively compare the manifestly similar history of the collection of kindred works, especially the collection of the Psalter,\* some extremely important truths will be discovered as scattered indications and vestiges of that history.

1. Until the destruction of Jerusalem the prophetic books originating in the second period remained evidently tolerably complete and unaltered. Of the books of the earliest period, many may have gradually perished, as, in fact, we have but the small book of Yôél of this age. But the works of the great prophets of the second period, being of themselves of more enduring worth, were according to all indications in existence in greater numbers. The dates and the authors of particular books and pieces could also certainly be fixed with considerable accuracy. The memory of the labours of the great prophets had not then become too faint; historical remarks were from the first scattered over many prophetic books (as was observed above); and there is no difficulty in deriving such brief headings, giving the names of authors, as we have (Joel i. 1; Amos i. 1) from the author himself, or at all events from very ancient readers. How accurately in Yéremyá's days all the best of the people were acquainted with what had happened a hundred years before with reference to a prophet and his words and his lot, we have clear evidence of in Jer. xxvi. 1-19.

Several very ancient glosses, which have either crept into the present text, or which must have lain before the collectors and arrangers of the succeeding age as material for headings, plainly originated in those early centuries: as may be seen also from the fact that they pervade all those parts which later were placed together when great changes were made by different arrangers. We find them most commonly in such much read books

\* As this is described in the *Dichter des A. Bs. Ia*,

as Yesaya and Mikha. They contain (1) remarks as to the subject-matter of the pieces. As readers in those times often designated a passage after an unusual word or a striking sentence found in it, an ancient reader intended to designate the entire piece to which they belong by the words *משא בהמות נגב* Isa. xxx. 6, *Oracle of the beasts of the south*, i.e. of the southern animals named in this verse: but it is very remarkable that this designation has obtained a place at the commencement of the passage; from which fact we learn (what is of itself very probable), that an early reader would write a designation of this sort at first simply in the margin of the passage opposite the rare word, that he might thereby facilitate the finding of the passage. This designation, a still later copyist, or editor, might have made the heading of a piece, but by accident the matter did not get so far, on the contrary the words crept later into the text itself. Similarly the heading Isa. xxi. 13, *Oracle in (or upon) the Steppe*, which in conformity with later usage and the construction of Zech. ix. 1, might be interpreted as meaning *Arabia*, was certainly first taken from v. 13, and the heading xxii. 1, *Oracle of the valley of vision*, from v. 5.—(2) Interpretations of a word or sentence as such readers understood it who often lived centuries after Yesaya, whose views therefore cannot be for us at all authoritative, as Isa. ix. 14, where an entire verse in the style of Yesaya is interpolated, essentially with the same purport and from the same hand as the interpolated word xxix. 10. In the same way, an early reader of Mic. vi. 5, where the words *from Schittim unto Gilgal* have crept into the text, must have intended merely to refer to the passage of the present Pentateuch where Bileam is spoken of. (3) Passages of a similar sense from other prophets, to which belong Isa. vii. 8 B, and probably Mic. ii. 12, sq.

Also to these earliest times belong very probably many important omissions and transpositions of verses, such as we suppose have occurred in Amos v. 7-10. On the other hand, it is worthy of attention with what evident purity the text of

many other very ancient pieces, *e.g.* the whole of Hosea, has been preserved.

2. A decided change in the treatment of this literature followed the wholly transformed period which succeeded the destruction of Jerusalem. While the general ruin must undoubtedly have extended with greater or less severity also to the literary treasures of the people, in the enthusiastic period of the return from captivity and of the foundation of a new community (as will be particularly described in the course of this work), a host of new prophetic pieces were written, as it were on thousands of fly-leaves, often possessing great poetic beauty. But they differed from the earlier pieces, inasmuch as they were composed, in brief or elaborate form, of the pure anticipations and longings of prophets who were but very distantly connected with public life; their pieces had therefore no historical notes, and at that time history was confined entirely to the Gentile nations. It is not difficult to imagine how this new flood of literature, whose contents must have answered to the necessities of the new era especially, and have stood in great favour, might mix in many ways with the older pieces that had escaped the wreck, at all events as long as these were circulating in a sporadic manner. However, this age of the renovated Jerusalem was also an age in which a wholly new enthusiasm awoke for the truth and glory both of ancient Israel generally and in particular of the ancient prophets. This may be seen very plainly in the enthusiastic words of the Great Anonymous B. Isa. ch. xl.-lxvi. and in so many other concurring witnesses. In these times accordingly the collection, preservation, and elucidation of the best writings of the Past of their own nation was undertaken with a zeal that had not before been known: and while this can be observed in detail in the other departments of the literature,\* it is obvious in the case of the prophetic books.

\* Comp. the *Dichter des A. Bs.* Ia. p. 242, sq. 263, II. p. 60, *Hist. of Israel* (iv. p. 246, sq.)

1. Not that now the attempt was first made to collect and carefully preserve the finest fruits of the prophetic literature of all preceding centuries: this had evidently been attempted before the destruction of Jerusalem. And if a collection was about to be undertaken of the writings of various prophets, the chronological order might be much more easily followed in the case of such writings than of those of other branches of literature, as for instance the Psalms. It is true that in no branch of the literature of this people was it the traditional custom for the author as such to write his own name in either an inscription or heading: in those early times the feeling of the people was too simple for this. Accordingly during the period when the peculiarly prophetic literature attained great perfection, not a few books were published without a name;\* and several periods, such as that, for instance, above mentioned, at the end of the Babylonian captivity, presented special occasions for this anonymous literature. It was also very natural that in the case of many prophetic pieces an accurate remembrance of their authors should be lost, owing to the fact that they had been displaced from the place they originally held in a greater work, obtaining gradually a more independent circulation or quite another connection. Notwithstanding we may safely maintain what was said above.

We have but carefully to look at the prophetic collection of the twelve books (*τὸ δωδεκαπρόφητον*), and the manner of its formation and origin of its designation, and we shall see plainly, that the books (1) Yôél, (2) 'Amôs, (3) Hoséa, (4) Mikha, (5) Nahûm, (6) Ssefanya, constitute its oldest portion, and were thus collected and arranged as early as the end of the seventh century. For the question as to the addition to them of the others, will be considered immediately. But if from those six books we except those of 'Amôs and Nahûm, which might even at that

\* For instance, from the 7th century B.C., the piece which was then appended to the book of Mikha, and now counts as ch. vi. sq.

early period have borne their headings from older hands, the headings of the others present the greatest similarity in this respect that they all run uniformly, *The word of Yahvé which came to . . . . .* The definitions of time also were plainly added immediately to the headings of the books of 'Amôs and Ssefanya by those ancient hands, as is more particularly shown below. It is also a matter of the greatest probability, that those six small books were at that time grouped exactly in the order mentioned above, accurately corresponding to their chronology. For when the later edition of this collection was published, which will shortly be dealt with, the book of Hoséa might easily be placed first, mainly on account of its larger size: in just the same way as in the edition of the LXX., only with the principle carried still further, the little book of Yôél has been removed to the fourth place, while Hoséa, 'Amôs, and Mikha, each according to its size, has been put before it. The chief point here, however, is, that the age of the prophetic pieces, especially in the times preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, before the historical consciousness of the nation had been so severely shaken, was in general much more easily discerned. For of all branches of literature, the prophetic was the first in which the names of the authors were easy to be found and preserved.\* Not that the prophets when they published a book always forthwith paraded their names in a heading on its front (headings of entire books are never very ancient), although this was done with growing frequency, because it had become the custom.† But since an ancient prophet always worked quite publicly and the guarantee for the truth of his words was based essentially upon his name, it was always easy to find out, especially from the incidental

\* Comp. the *Dichter des A.Bs.* Ia p. 277; II. p. 55-59. *History of Israel*, I. 56, sq. (I. p. 85, sq.)

† The headings of the book of Yéremyá without doubt originated from himself, in the way described below; similarly that which is now the second of the book of Nahûm, which also has a peculiar character.



historical references and notes, who the author of a book of this description was; and it was never a matter of doubt who wrote the books of 'Amôs and Hoséa. The prophet often incidentally mentioned his own name somewhere or other in his book, most naturally at the beginning, as Hos. i. 2, although in this case it was more customary for him to speak of himself in the first person. The high esteem which the best of the prophets easily won for themselves and the great attention which the best and the most learned of the nation paid to their utterances, supplied all else that was wanting in this respect; successive editors very easily added headings, for instance that of the book of 'Amôs; and although many later additions have crept into the headings of the *Dôdekaprôphêton* (as we shall soon see), there is still no doubt but that in the case of no other books was attention so seriously and early paid to the names of their authors as was the case with the prophetic books.

There existed, therefore, before the destruction of Jerusalem, a collection of smaller books of various prophets: and there could be no happier thought with reference to pieces which might so easily be lost, notwithstanding their great value, than to preserve them by collecting them. It was an equally wise thought, to select and join to this collection not merely one or two solitary pieces from the numerous and varied writings of a great prophet such as Yesaya. Of his works also a selection, because they appeared too voluminous, was received. It is the selection which has been preserved, at all events substantially, Isa. ch. i.—xxiii.; and when we come to this prophet, we shall see how closely this selection is connected with the prophet's immediate work. There can be no doubt but that this *Selection of Oracles of Yahvé* was really published in the period preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, if the treatment this selection then receives from the following editor is only borne in mind. For as it was at first divided, evidently only longer and shorter pieces were distinguished, implying a conception of the selection quite different from that of the following editor.

Still, the enthusiasm for collecting and carefully preserving the prophetic writings plainly did not grow comprehensive and lasting until the first bright days of the new Jerusalem : and if we follow the history of the collections, all indications agree in leaving no doubt but that

2. this was the time at which the shape in which these two great books have been preserved for us was determined. A close examination of these books as we now have them clearly reveals, on the one hand, that the same last hand was at work upon Isa. ch. i.—xxiii. and upon the above earlier collection of minor prophetical books. It is plainly the same hand which wrote the heading to the Book of Yesaya, *Prophecy of Yesaya son of 'Amôs, which he uttered with respect to Yuda and Jerusalem in the days of 'Uzzia, Yothan, Achaz, and Hizqia, kings of Yuda*, and placed exactly the same list of kings in the headings of the books of Hoséa and Mikha, save that in the case of the latter book, 'Uzzia's name is omitted, but manifestly only to indicate that Mikha was a little younger than Hoséa and Yesaya.\* These notes of time according to the kings of Yuda are further manifestly intended only to indicate generally *the century* (as we should say) in which these prophets lived ; so indefinite are they : and a close examination teaches that Hoséa was considerably older than Yesaya, and Hoséa's prophecies did not extend so far down, nor Mikha's so far up by a great way as Yesaya's. Accordingly these notes of time are of an entirely different kind from those in the heading to 'Amôs and Ssefanya's book, or to Isa. vi. 1 ; xiv. 28, or from those even in the book of Yéremyá, Hezeqiel, Haggái and Zakharya ; the note of time of Hoséa's book contradicts, besides, the

\* The fact that in the Book of Yesaya the older and larger form  $\text{יְהֵי}$ —is found at the end of the proper names instead of  $\text{יָהִי}$ —, is not of itself sufficient, in the face of so many evidences for the unity, to prove anything to the contrary : it merely shows that both collections subsequently passed through different hands again, until they received the present form, a fact for which there is other evidence.

older chronological note which is still preserved in the heading. All that we see here, therefore, is, that at the time of the restoration of Jerusalem explanatory notes of this kind began to be added to the books ; and of exactly the same sort are those indications of the subject-matter, of a very general nature, such as, *Concerning Yuda and Jerusalem*, Isa. i. 1 ; ii. 1, or *Concerning Samaria and Jerusalem*, Mic. i. 1. These notes also all point to the same hand, and have as little accurate agreement with the real subject-matter as those chronological notes, so that they cannot by any means be assigned to the ancient prophets themselves. The same hand may also be seen in the use of the term *הַיְּהוּדִים* and *הַיְּזִירִי* Isa. i. 1 ; ii. 1 ; xiii. 1 ; ‘Obadya v. 1 ; Mic. i. 1 ; Hab. i. 1 ; and in the equally characteristic use of *מִשְׁנֵה*, explained above p. 79, to which we shall recur. The comparison of all the other annotations is sufficient to show how far these similarities are from being accidental ; and we may conclude from all this, that these two books, in those respects in which we are now considering them, received their final form at that time from the same editor.

On the other hand, it is unmistakable, that the small strophes, Isa. xii. and xxiii. 15-18, each one of which concludes one of the two halves of the collection, Isa. i.—xxiii., and neither of which bears the marks of Yesaya’s style, were added by this new editor of the Yesaya-book. Each of these strophes only continues in a new manner the general subject of the passage to which it is attached, but the special subject-matter and the peculiarities of the language of each point plainly to the times of the restoration of Jerusalem. It is only natural to suppose that those who were engaged in collecting and newly editing ancient prophetic pieces were themselves still animated by a prophetic spirit, as we shall see at length in the Appendix to this work. In fact, we cannot imagine anything more suitable than that those who were in such times the collectors, the new editors, and, by virtue of a few added notes, even the first interpreters of the ancient prophets, should also

themselves belong to the most recent prophets: they might therefore, in the exaltation of prophetic language of themselves further carry on certain points, and by that means render their edition still more attractive for their age. For such free additions no place is more fitted than the end of a considerable section; and just as the collectors of Psalms liked to conclude a collection with a Doxology,\* so might an editor of prophetic writings indicate the two halves of the Yesaya-book by a suitable sentence of his own coining.

We will now observe how this younger prophet treated each of the two works he was about to republish. As the Yesaya-work in its earlier abridgment was already divided into the two parts of longer and shorter pieces, he allowed this division to remain, designated however the first half as containing oracles *Concerning Yuda and Jerusalem*, at the same time giving greatest prominence to Jerusalem, quite in accordance with the feeling of Yesaya. The single pieces of this first half, ch. i.—xii. he did not wish further to distinguish by headings: before the second piece only, which really differs most sensibly from the first, he placed (ii. 1.) the more compressed heading, *The word* (p. 79) *which Yesaya, son of Amos, uttered as a prophet concerning Yuda and Jerusalem*, whilst the heading i. 1, with its note of time, explained above, is manifestly intended to serve for the whole book as well. The piece ix. 7—x. 4, begins it is true with Samaria, and the following, and in this case last, piece, x. 5—ch. xii. with Assyria; but both recur presently to Yuda and Jerusalem; and so far the note of subject-matter (i. 1; ii. 1) was not inappropriate. All the more remarkable is the view the final editor took of the smaller pieces of the second half, and his supplying them with uniform headings. He distinguishes each as נִשְׁפָּט, since he found the small piece against the Philistines, xiv. 28, so designated already by Yesaya: and it is evident he understood by a *Massa* of this kind an oracle against a foreign nation, yet not this alone, as the heading, xxii. 1, makes credible.

\* See the *Dichter des A. Bs.* Ia p. 246, sq.

But he found also already attached to this Yesaya-book two of those anonymous pieces, which were described p. 91, that had not been written before nearly the end of the Babylonian predominance, *circa* 550—540 B.C. Such anonymous pieces, as is above shown, p. 92, might by degrees easily come to be ascribed to the author of the book to which they had been appended; and since by that time there had been an interval of 40—50 years from the former edition of the Yesaya-book, our collector might easily ascribe them to Yesaya himself. We must also bear in mind, that at that time the peculiarly national treasures and interests of the people lay scattered far and wide and were exposed to ruin; and those anonymous pieces had certainly been written in Babylon, whilst our new editor of the Yesaya-book, as all the evidence shows, lived in the sacred land of his fathers. These two pieces are xiii. 2—xiv. 23 and xxi. 1—10. But the larger piece of these two appeared to our younger prophet to deserve the first place here, not only as the longest of all but also as the greatest and most beautiful oracle against Babel: accordingly he assigned it the first place, and on that account gave it a heading not so short as the others, which would have merely described its subject, *Oracles of Babel, i.e.* against Babel, but added still further, *which Yesaya son of 'Amôs spoke as prophet*, with the view of indicating at the same time by the longer heading, in conformity with that of the first half, i. 1, the commencement of the second half. Probably he felt himself the more warranted in doing this, since the real author had constructed this artistic piece against Babel only as a further extension of the short piece of Yesaya's against Assyria which we still find following it, xiv. 24-27. The pieces, xv. 1; xix. 1; xxiii. 1, he might then easily designate according to their subject-matter as the oracles against *Moab, Egypt, and Tyrus*, but when in xvii. 1, he designates the piece xvii. 1-11 as an oracle against *Damascus*, this is done only as later readers designate the subject-matter of a piece sometimes from the first, or an otherwise prominent word in it, especially at its commence-

ment.\* It is still easier to account for the work of the later hand in the similar headings, xxi. 1, 13 ; xxii. 1.† The absence of such a heading to ch. xx. may be explained from its historical opening ; but its absence in such pieces as xvii. 12—ch. xviii. and xxii. 15-25, can be accounted for only on the supposition that it was not the hand of Yesaya which distinguished by headings all the pieces of this half of the book, which with respect to their original meaning are very distinguishable. When all this is carefully considered there is no room for further doubt.

In issuing a new edition of the collection of various smaller prophets, our younger prophet adopted the following course of procedure. In the first place, he added five other books to those six small ones, namely, (1) the small pieces ‘Obadya and Yona ; these two he placed before Mikha, because he knew as a historical fact that the prophets of this name belonged to the older prophets, although the small piece of ‘Obadya’s may only then have got into more general circulation again by means of a recasting and enlargement of it by a younger prophet of that time,‡ and this little book of Yona can then have been only just written ;—(2) the book of Habaqqûq, which he placed before the book of Ssefanya, although according to strict history it had been written some decades after the latter book ;—and (3) the books of Haggâi and Zakharya, which were then somewhat modern, but had certainly been already well approved by the general judgment of contemporaries ; and we shall soon see that at that time only the original book of Zakharya, ch. i.—viii. was received into the collection. Secondly, he also introduced into this collection in the manner above described, his headings, and amalgamated what he wished to add with those headings which we have seen he found already in existence. In the case

\* As in the instance named above, p. 89, and as in the Suras of the Qorân.

† With respect to all these headings and the somewhat different one xxi. 11, see below under each passage.

‡ See below on the Book ‘Obadya.

of the two books of Haggái and Zakharya, which he received entire, there was nothing for him to add, these books being then quite modern, and containing in themselves all that was needful to be known with respect to their authorship, age, and subject-matter. In the case of the book of Nahûm, he placed before the older heading a second, namely, *Oracle concerning Nineve*, the clearest mark of his hand; and without doubt it was he who headed also the following piece quite similarly, *the oracle which the prophet Habaqqûq uttered*, whilst the musical notes in chapter iii. may probably owe their origin to Habaqqûq himself. What parts of the headings of the books of Hoséa, 'Amôs, 'Obadya, Mikha, are to be referred to our younger prophet, we have already seen.

We have less reason to doubt the activity of this new editor of the two great books, seeing that at that time the book of Yéremyá was newly edited and published by another younger prophet, as we shall see more particularly when we come to this prophet.

3. These two books of collections, after that the work of editing had been set going by the younger prophet, both passed through very various subsequent fortunes before they received their present form.

The three pieces which now form Zakharya, ch. ix.-xiv. were subsequently appended to the collection of small writings of various prophets. There can be no doubt but that these three pieces were appended by the same although a later hand. For this last editor of the collection, finding that all the pieces which he wished to append had no names, but seeing that the first began with the purely prophetic words, *The flight of the oracle of Yahvé*, explained above, p. 79, thought it appropriate to preface the other two pieces with the same words, with the addition, however, of *Concerning Israel*,\* which was necessary, since without it these purely poetical words would have been

\* **לְיִשְׂרָאֵל** concerning Zakh. xii. 1, or **לְמָלְכֵנוּ** Mal. i. 1, since, acc. to Gram. § 217 i, it has essentially the same force; comp. Isa. xiv. 28.

imperfect and indefinite. This is of itself quite individual and unique, and points to a very distinct editor. But this same editor without doubt saw very clearly that precisely these three pieces were of sufficient importance to be appended to the existing collection of various prophets, and wherefore they should be received precisely in the order in which we find them. The first of the three pieces, it is quite clear, he found bearing no names, but they justly appeared to him on account of their high Messianic import of sufficient importance to warrant their reception. In this way certain older pieces were introduced amongst the last and latest portions of the present book, just as a few very old Psalms\* were received into the third and last collection of Psalms. This editor knew or felt instinctively and rightly that the piece (Zakh. ix.-xi.) was the older of the two, and placed it first: only the words ch. xiii. 7-9 have found their way by an oversight into the middle of the production of the later prophet (Zakh. xii.-xiv.) which is itself properly two pieces. The proper place of the words ch. xiii. 7-9 is at the end of ch. xi. The third anonymous piece which had to be received is the latest of all that found a place in the prophetic Canon of the Old Testament: it was not written before the middle of the 5th century B.C., and at the time of our editor was probably a very recent production; he assigned it the last place, and added to its heading the words,† *By Mal'akhî*, thus ingeniously denominating the anonymous author from the words iii. 1. But in this we see quite another hand than that of the previous editor; yet this last editor of our present book might very well live during the latter years of Nehemya (circa 410 B.C.)

Thus during various times and by different stages this fine book was formed, an anthology of the writings of the various prophets, exclusive of Yesaya, Yéremyá, and Hezeqiel, finally bringing together, like the collections of Proverbs and of

\* Comp. the *Dichter des A. B. Ia.* p. 243, sq.

† מַלְאכִי, which expression in a heading is another peculiarity of our final editor.



Psalms, the undying products of prophecy, and finished about the same time as these collections. Later the work was called the *Book of the Twelve*, the anonymous pieces before the book of Mal'akhî, described above, being reckoned as part of the book of Zakharya;\* but that even the last editor intended this distribution and enumeration is not merely without proof but is also inconceivable according to what has been said above.

Our present book Yesaya, as we have said, was completed differently. Probably not long after the above editor, a later collector appended to it three pieces, which, in the most direct contrast with the procedure of the previous editor, he left without any headings. Amongst these is the piece ch. xxviii.-xxxii., with which, probably from the first, ch. xxxiii. was connected, a thoroughly ancient piece from Yesaya's own hand, which the last editor, fortunately, all in good time, may have found somewhere, and considered to be of sufficient importance to be preserved in this book. The two other pieces have no earlier origin than the great multitude of fly-leaves of the first years of the new Jerusalem, described above, p. 90; but in the piece, ch. xxiv.-xxvii. there are besides so many glorious fragments from older prophets and especially from the works of Yesaya interwoven, that the last editor, led by correct feeling, might receive it into this book; and the small piece ch. xxxiv. and xxxv. was placed after the older piece ch. xxviii.-xxxiii. most likely immediately after it was written. With one more addition the last editor thought he had re-edited the Yesaya-book for his age as completely as was possible: he placed the purely historical piece, concerning Yesaya, ch. xxxvi.-xxxix., taken from the *Imperial Diaries*, likewise quite at the end of his new edition, just as a similar piece, ch. lii., was appended quite at the close of the book of Yéremyá by another editor and from the same source. And as a fact the history of the

\* Upon the same principle as that according to which later Jewish *Savants* seem to have said that any Psalm without a name must be ascribed to the last named poet.

origin and collection of the Yesaya-book is finished with this addition.

But this period of such uncommon activity in collecting and re-editing the finest pieces of the prophecy of Israel, which was then so rapidly hastening towards its complete cessation, could not conclude its endeavours until it had finally grouped together and brought into close connexion the great works which had approved themselves as the best. According to an old account this was done in the time of Nehemya\* and all our foregoing examinations lead to the conclusion that it really was done then. Since the ancients, however, liked symmetry of books and volumes in the case of works or collections of works which claimed more than common esteem and were in constant use, it might be early observed as unpleasing that the books Yéremyá and Hezeqiel, as well as the τὸ δωδεκαπρόφητον formed almost exactly equal volumes, but that the Yesaya-book was much smaller than the others. With all the greater readiness a piece of very considerable length was finally appended to this book, by which means its volume was made equal in size to each of the other three. This added piece is the work of the Great Anonymous, the longest and most important of the pamphlets or fly-leaves of the period of the restoration of Jerusalem, which precisely on account of its length had not found admittance into the older collections as other pieces had, but continued to circulate in a detached form, and might therefore easily have perished altogether. Humanly speaking, it is a great good fortune that this piece was finally rescued in this manner. It remained ever afterwards, but quite loosely, appended to the Yesaya-book, without any heading or other kind of relation to it. It was only readers of a later age that could fall into the error, in this as in other similar cases, of thinking that it belonged originally to the Yesaya-book, and of drawing further conclusions therefrom which are wholly groundless.

\* See *Geschichte des V. Israel*, vii. 467, sq.

There was still another cause that favoured the annexation of this great piece precisely to the Yesaya-book. All evidences and indications go to show that in this grouping together of the four larger prophetic books those of Yéremyá and Hezeqiel stood first, because they were least distant from the later generations both as regards time and intelligibility, and were besides the really complete books of these prophets. In those times men had not lost the distinct feeling that there had been preserved only as it were fragments and small remnants of the other prophets; at the same time an equally true feeling existed that these fragments should be arranged according to their dates. The *dodekapropheton*, accordingly, was placed before the Yesaya-book, a position it still holds in the LXX., not only because it was at first smaller than at present, but also because the first of the books which are preserved in it are older than Yesaya, and as, therefore, the Yesaya-book stood originally last,\* that great piece of the Anonymous, when the desire arose to receive it, was affixed to it for this amongst other reasons.†

III. The fragments of the prophetic literature, preserved by the Canon of the Old Testament, having been presented to us in that condition, which has been described above briefly as the result of all our closer examinations, the course which we have now to pursue is sufficiently clear.

Our first and absolutely necessary duty certainly, will always be to endeavour, as accurately as possible, to get at the original meaning and import of every piece and every word in relation to its own age. Just as certainly as every genuine prophetic word proceeded from its own age and was primarily intended for it, so sure is it that we can only then fully comprehend it when we vividly realise again this period of its nativity, and

\* The order Yer., Hez., Yes., Dodek. is found in a series of Hebrew manuscripts, but it had its origin in a mixture of both the other orders.

† I have here only presented somewhat more definitely what was shown in the first edition, and in the *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, vii. p. 467, sq.

from this point discern what was its import for its own and what for every age. True, it is often difficult, even approximately, to rediscover the true date of a piece: still, every product bears unmistakably its birth-marks, as it were, in numberless traces and indications, which, on closer consideration and comparison, may be rediscovered with increasing clearness, supposing only that the enquirer has made himself well acquainted with a few facts in this department, and has thus made a good commencement for all further enquiries. And it is not sufficient merely to discover with certainty the age or the author of every piece: it is of equal importance and necessity as vividly and accurately as possible to investigate and clearly perceive the real sense and the literary disposition and art of each piece, both as a whole and in its parts: until this has been done the sense of all pieces has not appeared to us in their larger connexion and with all their truth; and a true acquaintance with the real connexion and meaning of the words, verses, strophes, and entire pieces, reflects a bright light upon the questions of age and authorship. In fact, it is precisely this knowledge of the true sense and connexion of the pieces which is not only the most essential but may be also the most certain, and must be made the preparation for all further enquiries as to age and authorship. When we have investigated and understood a piece internally in every way possible, after which the occasion of it will at this stage begin clearly to appear, we may then proceed to enquire into its age, and following all discoverable traces both within and beyond the piece we should be unable seriously to go astray. In the case of doubtful pieces the last enquiry is for the names of their authors, and should we here and there be unable to discover them, the harm will not be very great. For while we have much preserved from some prophets whose names are known, and are able easily to discover what, *e.g.* Yesaya wrote by any word wherever we might read it, since he has given the impress of his unique exaltation of character to every word that

originates from him ; on the other hand, many pieces are so individual and unique that it is very difficult to discover the name of their author, and often quite impossible with the means at our command.

Still, what is of chief importance, we have already so much and certain knowledge as to the sense and connexion as well as the age and chronological order of all the pieces preserved, or we can have such knowledge if we desire it, that in this case still more than in that of the Psalter, it is time, for the purpose of our historical appreciation of them, to attempt, as far as it is possible and needful,\* a new arrangement of all these remnants. This will not only facilitate the survey of the whole, but will enable us to bring our elucidations into a smaller compass and to avoid unnecessary repetitions, whilst for the true friend of the Bible it may be a matter of indifference whether he finds one of its truths at this or at another place.

For, truly, whoever endeavours in this way to rediscover completely the original import of the prophetic pieces of the Old Testament in all their life and truth, does not sin against their meaning or dignity ; the proviso being, that he shall not give way in his enquiries and suppositions to unsubstantiated hypotheses, which may have an apparent but no real foundation, and not suffer himself to be ensnared by doubtful and detached opinions. On the contrary, whoever proceeds from hypotheses, which have received substantiation from all quarters

\* Eichhorn, in whose three volumes (*Hebräische Propheten*, 1816-1819) the attempt was made to newly arrange according to age all the prophetic pieces, did not venture on a similar work upon the Psalms. However, as early as the year 1840 it might be clearly seen in the first edition of the present work, *Die Propheten des A. B.* that great progress had been made in our knowledge of the Bible during the interval between 1819 and 1840. Nevertheless it will always remain the merit of Eichhorn to have been the first to make the bold attempt to arrange the whole of the prophetic pieces in their historical order, a merit which was generally treated with contempt by his contemporaries. As to the English works of Pusey upon the Prophets, which must in our day have their origin in the wish to annihilate all Biblical science, see the *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1862, p. 343, sq. 1681, sq. and below, on the Book of Daniel.

and will constantly supply their own substantiation in the course of their application, and, by making his survey from certain well ascertained points, conceives the whole territory before him in all its original truth,—he will rediscover and far more highly value the ancient life of Israel in this important sphere of it not only with greater certainty but also in greater glory than he who will adhere to the letter, although he will in that case not understand even this. It is only he who has no idea of the nature, the grandeur, and necessity of genuine prophecy, nor acquires it by means of the prophetic pieces, he who will not hear of the divine Spirit and has not experienced in himself even at a distance his influence and his words, who will always be a no less unfortunate than unworthy reader, inquirer, and interpreter in this region ; with which fact this introduction comes round at its close to the principles with which it commenced.

# COMMENTARY UPON THE WRITINGS

## OF THE

### OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS.

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#### I. PROPHETS OF THE EARLIEST PERIOD.

#### I.--YÔÉL.

1. THE little book of Yôél, which has been preserved for us in the Old Testament, bears upon its face the obvious occasion of its production. An unusually violent plague of locusts had for successive years laid the land waste (i. 4 ; ii. 25), and we have here a most accurate and vivid description of it, so much so that all descriptions of modern travellers confirm it in every particular, and the inference is involuntary that our eloquent prophet must have witnessed the scene just before he wrote. As most frequently happens,\* a long and severe drought occurred in conjunction with this plague, and this second cause of devastation is referred to with equal vividness (i. 17-20 ; comp. ii. 22-24 ; iv. 18). At that time, the kingdom of David had experienced a new period of decline, and the kingdom of Yuda, as but a small fragment of it, had been reduced both by its contracted territory and weakness in relation to foreign peoples, to an almost solely agricultural community. Consequently the loss of one or more harvests was heavily felt (i. 11, sq. ; ii. 19, 25, sq. comp. Ps. lxx.). It must not be forgotten either that the kingdom of Yuda was then suffering from other evils of longer duration. Heathens

\* After an interval of many years, the last appearance of drought and locusts in conjunction in Sinai was in the years 1864 and 1865, and also in Palestine, especially at Yafa ; as the full reports of that summer announce.

had broken into her territory, carrying away many men and much treasure. Still worse, they had torn away many provinces of the Davîdic kingdom, and shared them amongst themselves (ii. 19; iv. 1-21). But this more distant calamity, this dishonour from abroad, was almost forgotten in the presence of the more recent and domestic trouble, which appeared to be a judgment from Heaven and the commencement of a total destruction. When therefore in the midst of a long, oppressive drought still another deluge of locusts threatened, and with that the final punishment of the judgment-day of Yahvé itself seemed to be coming,—then Yôél lifted up his voice. Notwithstanding his deepest agitation at the misfortunes of his country, with a powerful appeal he summoned the whole people to a general and solemn day of humiliation in the temple. Carried away by the sight of the present calamity and by the fear of another which was threatened, he exhorted all to the deepest humiliation. It is only at the conclusion that the unhappy relations of the people with the surrounding nations occur to him (ii. 17).

This day of humiliation must have been observed according to the wishes of Yôél and his commands as a prophet. Soon after this a plentiful rainfall must also have followed (ii. 21-23), and in this first sign of divine favour the prophet at once recognised the possibility of a happy crisis in the whole condition of the repentant people. The more immediate troubles might go by, the year might still be fruitful, the locusts be driven away by the wind, and the nation aroused from its despair, to a degree of zeal all the more intense. Let there be, however, but the commencement of reformation, an accession of spiritual strength and divine courage, and with this a more rapid advance to victory over old embarrassments and weaknesses is possible. With a freer glance into the future, our prophet hoped, therefore, that his people which had been brought into purer acquaintance with Yahvé, and again made to feel more sensibly his influence, would soon rise from one



degree of divine grace to another, until it would attain a new and more perfect spiritual life, and, with this, heroic victory over its foreign oppressors. And this, in a word, would be a true and enduring return of Davidic greatness and glory. On the fast-day itself Yôél may have proclaimed the promise of the divine mercy, at the conclusion of the penitential prayer of the priests and the people (Ps. lxxxv.). In this book he has placed the two addresses together with a short historical explanation between them (i. 2—ii. 17, and ii. 18—iv. 21), the one having been delivered before the national humiliation and the other afterwards. He placed them side by side as they are mutually explanatory, and the result itself might show that the first address had not remained without fruit. In any case, they were not written down until after the rainfall (ii. 23). From all this it follows, that we have in the two addresses of this little book, with the note that divides them (ii. 18, 19a), an entire and finished production, and a complete chapter of the prophetic life of Yôél.\*

2. Although a plague of locusts may for the moment be much more destructive and terrible than war, or almost any other national calamity, its traces are nevertheless soon lost, and it need excite no surprise that we meet with no mention of the present one in the historical books. It may be amongst those which 'Amôs, iv. 9, refers to : that is all that can be said. Be that as it may, all other signs combine in claiming for this prophet a high antiquity.

We see here the prophetic office in Jerusalem retains still the same antique greatness as in the times of Davîd when a Nathan and a Gad filled it. An entire nation is still in dependence upon the prophet without opposition or complaint. If he desires an afflictive solemnity, it is willingly observed ; his word is still like an authoritative command which all gladly obey. And not only is his word still so exalted, simple and

\* The correct view of the character and plan of the whole book was given as early as the year 1831 in the review of Credner's Yôél, in the *Gött. Gel. Anz.* of the same year, pp. 1916-1918.

without reserve, as if there was no need to pay any attention to objections and opponents; in the nation itself there is no sign of division, of grievous idolatry or superstition; the ancient simple faith still lives whole and undivided in the heart of the people, just as we must conceive it was in the times of David, for instance. Further, between priest and prophet there is yet no disruption whatever; indeed, the characteristic shades of Yôél's language show very clearly that he himself was a priest in Jerusalem. Of material things none are so important in his eyes as what are needful for the temple-service, the appointed sacrifices which were in danger of being interrupted by the desolation of the country, an interruption that might provoke the anger of Yahvé (i. 8, sq., 13, 16). Yet his being a priest did not necessarily affect his prophetic character, for later priests by birth became prophets without agreeing on that account with the priests.

From all these evidences it is manifest that at that time the nation still retained more of a simple and primitive character than it possessed in the days of 'Amôs.

The subject and the occasion of the book also point to a very ancient time. We cannot say, it is true, that a plague of locusts and an interruption of temple-sacrifices is not an important and fit subject for a prophet to speak about. In the case of a prophet nothing depends on the occasion, but everything on the way in which he conceives and treats truly spiritual things, whatever the occasion may be. Indeed, some later prophet probably spoke at the call of a similar occurrence, as *e.g.*, Yéremyá (ch. xiv. sq.) and Haggái on the occasion of a drought. Still, a later prophet would scarcely, like Yôél, have been carried away by the appearance of the locusts and the drought alone, have described them alone, and have called for a day of humiliation, for the sake of them alone, without assigning another reason; he would rather have merely used this to point out emphatically hidden or denied spiritual shortcomings, and in his exhortation to repentance he would

have indicated more definitely what sins were to be mourned over, and how the sinner ought to turn to Yahvé again. In the later life of the nation, on the one hand, errors and perversities multiply apace, while on the other, attention to the people's spiritual condition and a closer recognition of their shortcomings grow more quick: the spiritual life becomes so ascendant that natural objects are looked at only in the clear mirror of this, and are valued less for what they themselves are than for their spiritual import. When therefore Yôél is overpowered by the very first impressions of the plague of locusts and interruption of the sacrifices simply, as a mark of divine anger, and, carried away by it, calls the people to an entirely general acknowledgment of sin, although he has but a general and not special sense of sin, well-founded as this was; when, further, he not only addresses the people, but considers his address of sufficient importance to be recorded in a book, and at a time when writing was not common; this incontestably presupposes a primitive simplicity which is no longer to be met with in the books of 'Amôs and Hoséa. Hence readers in the Middle Ages were to be pardoned if they took the locusts figuratively as enemies, whether the Assyrian or another nation, for this difference between Yôél and other prophetic books is very great. But with our present means of knowledge, such an error becomes every day more inexcusable.

In particular it is the prophetic idea of the *day of Yahvé* which appears here (i. 15; ii. 2, sq.; iii. 4; iv. 14) still in its earliest and simplest form. As the king of extensive dominions may for a considerable period withdraw himself from his subjects as if he had left them, but some day suddenly appear among them in all his majesty, to hold the great general judgment, which had been so long delayed; in the same way, perhaps, the Invisible for a long time delays with *his day*, that day on which he reveals himself as judge over all, and yet he ever appears for judgment at the right time. At the thought of the *day of Yahvé* all men must always tremble. But if in

every day life men too often and too long forget it, such terrors as those that had been just felt must admonish them of it ; and if a day threatening final punishment should yet pass over more mercifully (as was the case now), it is not on that account never to be expected in the future. That is the idea of the *day of Yahvé* in its first simple, very applicable, and clear form. Whether the idea arose in Israel before the establishment of the monarchical government, we cannot say. When Yôél wrote, it was still an object of dread to the people ; in the time of 'Amôs it had already to bear the ridicule of some ; and Yesaya had to summon all his powers most earnestly to maintain its truth.

Another sign of the early age of Yôél is to be found in the way in which his fear lest the daily temple-offerings should be interrupted is expressed (i. 9, 13, 16 ; ii. 14). This fear, it is allowed, pervaded the primitive ages of all nations ;\* as far down as the latest period of the temple at Jerusalem such an interruption was looked upon as the greatest misfortune for the entire nation,† as if the thread of holy aspiration would be cut in twain, which ought perpetually to connect the earth with heaven ; indeed, in those latest times, this fear appeared in a new and stronger form, in proportion to the greater scrupulosity of the entire religious life that then prevailed. Nevertheless, that another prophet ever laid so great a stress on that interruption, as we see Yôél here doing, we do not find ; Yéremyá does not in the similar case in ch. xiv., although he was primarily a priest, like Yôél. Here therefore we have an expression of that primitive awe-struck feeling of religion in its earliest and most ancient form ; and it is not allowable to say that the prophet is speaking in accordance with popular belief.

Finally, the references to the condition of the nation point to the same age. Whilst the Davídic kingdom had already greatly declined, Edóm having revolted (iv. 19, comp. 2 Kings viii.

\* See, *Alterthümer des Volkes Isr.* p. 152. (129)

† As the instance quoted in *History of Israel* (iv. p. 543) shows.

20-22; xiv. 7), and the smaller neighbouring kingdoms repeatedly making predatory inroads on Yuda (iv. 1-21; ii. 19), there is still not the faintest suspicion of the Assyrians. On the contrary, we have here substantially the old unsubdued warlike spirit of the times of Debora and of David: the blood is still not washed off the hands of the enemies (iv. 21), and the prophet is himself in spirit a leader and inciter to battle (iv. 9-17). Of course, together with this there are the higher spiritual truths of the religion of Yahvé; yet the unbroken national spirit which here pervades the soul of the prophet himself, points to a very early age.

It is difficult to fix very definitely the date of the book. We may say roughly that this piece that stands quite alone and in no relation to other portions of the Old Testament will belong to the time of Yôásh, 2 Kings xii., before Edóm was chastised again (2 Kings xiv. 7), and when the Philistines and others, who had grown very rebellious under Yôrâm and his immediate successors, had a little while previously ventured on destructive depredations as far as Jerusalem (2 Chr. xxi. 16, sq.; xxiv. 23, sq.). This follows also from the fact that the oldest prophets from 'Amôs downwards (i. 2; ix. 13) repeat whole sentences and thoughts from Yôél, as if he were their model.\*

3. And without doubt this is not the only piece that Yôél wrote, though it is complete in itself. This might be concluded from the peculiarity of the language. This is not merely as thoroughly independent, original and poetic, as we should expect to find it in the period immediately succeeding David and Salômo, but has also a marvellous smoothness and beautiful ease; in fact, nothing distinguishes the language of this

\* When in 1826 I had correctly determined the date of the Song of Songs, it was easier to discover with certainty that of Yôél, and to defend it against the prejudices that were then so prevalent. Credner was the first publicly to attempt it in the work above referred to; but the above proofs, drawn from many aspects of the book, were still indispensable. Comp. further, the *History of Israel*, iv. 133 (iii. 622). On a recent attempt to place Yôél's age a century earlier, see the *Jahrb. der Bibl. wiss.* viii. 239, sq.

prophet so much from that of all others as the ease and sweetness of the flow of his speech in conjunction with its rare depth and volume. This peculiarity can be explained neither from the luxurious wealth of imagination which he could command as but few are able, nor from his antiquity. The only explanation is that he must have spoken and written much, and this little book was not the only production of his pen. And here there happily comes to our assistance the passage preserved by Yesaya ii. 2-4, and still better in its original length, Mic. iv. 1-4, which from the character of the language, of the high thoughts, and of the flow of eloquence must be referred to Yôél, and is repeated by both Yesaya and Mikha intentionally as the oracle of an older and acknowledged prophet.\* From the great similarity of the passage v. 3, where the transformed swords are spoken of, with Yôél iv. 10, one might be tempted to conclude that the passage had been torn from the end of our book, were it not that the conclusion of our book is too clear, and also elsewhere there is no hiatus where one could think the fragment might have stood :† with much greater probability it belongs to a lost address of Yôél's.

# 1. The word of Yahvé which came to Yôél son of 1 Pithûel, i. 1.

## I. *The admonition to humiliation*, i. 2—ii. 17.

Yôél speaks here from the midst of many locust-plagues, which had already been witnessed, and the fear of another and more destructive one ; and as the former plagues had been conceived by the consciously guilty nation as signs of Yahvé

\* In 1827 I had expressed this in my lectures, and in 1828 had the happiness of learning that Hitzig had independently arrived at the same view. *Comp. Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1829, p. 1127 and *Hitzig's Yesaya*, p. 22.

† Since the strophe iii. 1-5 (as will be shown) is somewhat too brief, one might suppose the passage must originally have stood after iii. 5 ; yet neither here is there a vacancy suitable to the sense of these words.

in anger with his land and people, and as the commencement and tokens of an approaching day of awful judgment, the next dreaded plague must seem to be the arrival of this great day. Yôél therefore as an orator delivers his admonition in a public assembly of the people (probably in the neighbourhood of the temple). He exhorts all to reflection and penitence, to contrition and humiliation before Yahvé. He endeavours to snatch the easy and thoughtless ones from their security, to arouse the indolent, and to urge all to a general repentance and amendment of life, which shall be as sincere as fruitful, to the end that the threatening day of Yahvé may pass over and spare the penitent nation. With this object in view, he calls for the appointment of a great general day of humiliation and mourning. Then the entire nation without exception must in deep contrition and wrestling prayer solemnly seek the mercy of Yahvé. One may observe in his address the extraordinary nature of the occasion, the seriousness of the immediate future together with heavy sorrow over already inflicted desolations, his powerful efforts to conduct the undivided attention and feeling of the whole people towards his object. As a man he would fain give way to lamentation and tears, as most even among the priests then gazed hopelessly into the future, in the confusion of sorrow without nobler energy or purpose (ii. 13); and in many passages his address passes over into a sorrow and lamentation which he finds it hard to control. But he is a prophet, and must not only keep himself erect, but also with noble strength lead all his brothers to do the duties commanded by the highest and calmest self-possession. Thus, in fact, the admonition grows gradually more powerful and irresistible; the language by its own flow grows freer, firmer and clearer. After the first few words on the terrible event, directed to the whole of the people, i. 2-4, the address, as if half in anger, singles out in the first instance the unconcerned drunkards as those who were most closely affected by the loss, but then turns specially and with lamentation to Jerusalem itself and the husbandmen, vv.

5-12; and already borne down by grief it tends increasingly to change into a simple lament. But at the right time it recovers itself in obedience to its true aim, to call first the priests and then the whole nation to repentance; and at last this aim is attained with as masterly force as intelligent self-control, i. 13—ii. 17.

The oration is therefore unfolded by the course of the emotion of the moment and the changes of feeling. The sources of its movement lie in the reiterated exhortations and admonitions, whilst the descriptions of the condition of things rather form the web of the web, the pause and confirmation of the true meaning. At first it looks as if the oration would die away, in the course of four successively shortening strophes, into simple lamentation and grief; but, on the contrary, from this point it rises in two successively longer strophes, to its fullest power, until in a last strophe, the 7th of the whole number, it can most calmly and clearly repeat its demands, in remembrance of the divine mercy. This is the structure of these strophes which acc. p. 75 is unsymmetrical, while nevertheless it rises to a higher symmetry.

### I.—1.

Hear this ye old men, and mark all inhabitants of the land: | hath this happened in your days, or in your fathers' days? || Of it tell your sons, | and your sons to their sons, and their sons to the future generation: || the leavings of the caterpillar the locust ate, the leavings of the locust the leaping insect ate, | and the leavings of the leaping insect the winged insect ate! ||

### 2.

5 Awake drunkards and weep, and wail all ye wine-drinkers | for the must, that it is plucked from your mouth! || For a people invaded my land,



mighty and numberless, | its teeth lion's teeth, and  
it has biters of a lioness, || it devoted my vine to  
desolation, my fig-tree to brokenness: | wholly  
stripped and cast it down, its branches become  
white! ||

## 3.

Weep [O Ssion] as a virgin girded in mourning  
for the spouse of her youth! || gift and wine is  
destroyed from Yahvé's house, | the priests mourn  
who serve Yahvé! || the field is wasted, the ground  
10 mourneth, | yea the corn is wasted, the must is  
shamed, the oil withered.

## 4.

Be shamed husbandmen wail vinedressers, for the  
wheat and for the barley, | that the harvest of the  
field is lost, || that the vine is shamed, and the fig-  
tree withered, | pomegranate palm also and apple,  
—all trees of the field dried up, | yea joy is shamed  
from the sons of men.

## II.—5.

Gird you lament ye priests, wail servants of the  
altar, | come spend the night in hair garments ye  
servants of my God, | because from the house of  
your God is withdrawn gift and wine! || sanctify a  
fast call an assembly! gather the old men, all  
inhabitants of the land unto the house of Yahvé  
15 your God | and cry unto Yahvé: || “O o the day! |  
Yes at hand is the day of Yahvé, and as might  
from the All-mighty it cometh! || Before our eyes is

not the food destroyed, | from the house of our  
God joy and gladness? ||

The seeds under their clods are shrunk up, the  
garners laid waste, the barns destroyed, | yea the  
corn is shamed! || How the cattle sigheth, the herds  
of beasts are bewildered, that they have no pas-  
ture; | the flocks of sheep also must be punished. ||  
Unto thee Yahvé I call! | for fire hath devoured  
the pastures of the desert, and flame consumed all  
20 the trees of the field; || the wild animals of the  
forest also pant after thee, | because the water's  
beds are dried up, and fire hath devoured the  
pastures of the common!" ||

## 6.

2. Blow the trumpet in Ssion, and shout on my holy  
1 hill, so that all the inhabitants of the land tremble! |  
for Yahvé's day cometh, yea it is at hand! || a day  
of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and fog, as  
twilight spread over the mountains; | a people  
great and mighty the like of which hath not been  
from of old, and after it will not be again unto the  
years of all generations! || Before it devoured fire,  
and after it blazeth flame, | as Eden's garden was  
the land before it, and after it is a desolate waste, |  
and also a pardoned remnant (*gnadenrest*) re-  
maineth not! ||

Like the look of horses is its look | and as steeds  
5 so they run; || as the sound of chariots they dance  
over the tops of the mountains, as fire-flame de-  
vouring the stubble crackleth, | as a mighty people

prepared for war: || before it nations tremble  
back, | all faces gathered burning redness! ||

Like heroes they run, like men of war they  
climb the walls, | each one in his ways they walk,  
and they bend not their path, || and one the other  
they push not, every one on his course they walk, |  
and around the missile falling they break not off; ||  
into the city they run, upon the walls they speed,  
into the houses they climb, | through the windows  
they enter like the thief! ||

10 Before him the earth quaked, the heavens  
stormed, | sun and moon became black and the  
stars withdrew their sheen; || and Yahvé thundered  
before his host, because very great his camp, |  
because mighty is the performer of his word; | yes  
great is Yahvé's day and very terrible, and who  
will endure it? ||

### III.—7.

But also now, saith Yahvé, return to me with  
your whole heart and with fasting and with weep-  
ing and with lamentation, || and rend your heart  
and not your garments, and return to Yahvé your  
God! | For gracious and pitiful is he, longsuffering  
and rich in kindness, repenting him of the evil: ||  
who knoweth but he will return and repent him, |  
and leave behind him blessing, gift and wine for  
Yahvé our God. ||

15 Sound the trumpet in Ssion, | hallow a fast, call  
a congregation! || gather the people, hallow the  
assembly, | assemble old men and gather children

and sucklings of the breast, | let the bridegroom come out of his chamber and the bride out of her closet! || Between the hall and the altar let the priests weep, the servants of Yahvé, | and say “ Spare Yahvé thy people, and expose not thy heritage to scorn so that heathen mock at them! | wherefore shall they say among the nations ‘ where is your God? ’ ” ||

I. 1. Inasmuch as the prophet appears in public, before some convention of the people, he first addresses the elders, the presidents of the meeting, and then all other members of the nation. This convention, however, being an ordinary one is very far from being as numerous as he desires to see on the coming day of humiliation, v. 14 ; ii. 15, sq. And it is the elders to whom the historical question in this passage is primarily addressed. The four names of locusts are in themselves of uncertain meaning. But the order in this instance is not accidental, as it may be for instance in ii. 25, but is intentionally observed in order to show, that what the former species of locusts had left a stronger and more injurious species, following the one upon the other, had devoured. As therefore a creature is harmful in proportion to its size, perfection, and swiftness, and a district which is preyed upon by every possible form of it must be at length laid waste, the observation of this order appears to point to the different ages and forms of these creatures. Nevertheless, no one would think of converting this poetic description with its general truth into an accurate historical enumeration. Yet it is of great importance to observe, that in our day exactly four species of locusts and four ages of them are distinguished in countries where locusts are best known.—1, the newly hatched ; 2, that with growing wings ; 3, that able to fly ; 4, that changing in colour. See *Le grand désert ou Itinéraire d'une caravane de Sahara au pays des Nègres, par Dumas*

*et Ausone de Chancel*, Paris, 1851. Comp. on this the *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1862, p. 335, sq.

2. If the prophet will now direct his appeal to individuals, the first he singles out, vv. 5-7, are the drunkards, even though they might be absent, whose beloved drink has been destroyed. They above all must be roused from their idle, indifferent, life! The prophet accordingly, as in anger at their dissipation, narrates the calamity from his own experience, v. 6, sq., where therefore the *first person* cannot be misunderstood, Yôél speaking here as a private man with a painful feeling of what he had witnessed. A *people* as Prov. xxx. 25, 27; but in this place a warlike people, and although anything rather than lions, yet equal to lions in devouring and destruction, the clear reference of which appears sufficiently, v. 7, stripped of all figure.

3. The next sufferers from the national trouble that occur to the speaker are the remaining inhabitants in town and country. But with these his mode of address immediately changes, grief overcoming him at the thought of them. Amongst all these sufferers, however, those in Jerusalem are the nearest to him, and so he here calls immediately upon *her*, vv. 8-10, who, without naming her, is ever before his eyes, Ssion (comp. Isa. iii. 25, and elsewhere), who often appears in poetic style as a virgin, deeply to lament as a virgin who has lost her betrothed bridegroom, since while even the temple with its priests suffers most keenly, for everyone the harvest of all means of life, necessary alike for the temple and all men, is lost before it can be garnered; corn, oil, and wine are destroyed upon the mourning soil of the land.

4. The last words of themselves lead to the husbandmen, v. 11, sq. whose just hope of the harvest has been so miserably disappointed. But it is not alone the tender vine and the noblest fruit-trees that stand there as it were shamed and blushing; from men themselves all joy appears as it were to be blanched and dying away.

II. 5. But just when the speaker is exposing himself to the danger of falling into helpless grief and despair, he quickly recovers himself after a short pause. He first calls boldly on the priests not merely to lament the loss mentioned in the previous sentences, girded in mourning apparel and keeping night-vigils in the temple (Ps. cxxxiv.) v. 13, but also, which is still more important and the aim of the whole address, to appoint a solemn day of humiliation, and then to cry unto Yahvé in a general assembly of fellow petitioners, v. 14. The prayer, vv. 15-20, which the prophet puts into their mouth, or rather the mouth of their spokesman, begins like a lamentation burdened with heavy sighs, over *the day*, that is, the terrible day of Yahvé's judgment, the approach of which is felt in the present signs, since what is now coming *comes as power from the All-powerful* (or might from the Almighty), (comp. p. 69), that is, with such terrible and overwhelming force, that it can come only from the All-powerful himself and must irresistibly point men to Him, a play on words which is repeated in the book of Yesaya, xiii. 6. The lamentation then proceeds in descriptions of particulars, how surely the food, *i.e.* the corn, is lost, v. 17, (briefly repeated from vv. 9, 13); how the drought is consuming even the corn that is still hidden under the clods, v. 17, thus destroying also the hope of future seed and harvest; how also all kinds of cattle suffer with men, v. 18. At length the cry for help is heard in this dreadful sultriness which burns throughout the desert and torments even the panting wild animals, v. 19 f. Comp. Am. vii. 4; Ps. xlii. 2.

6. But while the prophet in his own mind thus followed the thoughts which perhaps the priests might utter on the fast-day, he wandered from his chief object. He feels that the prayers of the priests alone will not suffice here. What is needed is the observance of a day of humiliation and prayer by the whole nation. After the above particular lamentations, it appears to him to be high time to prosecute this main object to its conclusion. Returning to a general exhortation, the

address, in this longest strophe, ii. 1-11, collects itself and puts forth all its energy to set forth the pressing need of a general fast, and to arouse all to observe it. The danger is indeed not small. Past experience of the calamity, its possible recurrence at any moment in a more overwhelming and destructive form, indeed the threatening signs of its return already visible, like a distant black cloud in the sky, make the prophet tremble. The march of the locusts appears like an innumerable well-organised army of irresistible rapidity, before which the whole earth trembles and the heavens grow dark (which in a certain sense is literal truth), an irresistible terrible army at the head of which Yahvé himself appears as commander, with his thunder, issuing his commands to destroy the land and chastise its inhabitants (and one may suppose that just while the prophet was speaking a tempest was rising in the distance). In this darkness, this onward march of an army of a far more destructive character than an army of human enemies, amidst this thunder and storm, the great day of vengeance and judgment, Yahvé himself seems in reality to be coming, the first tokens of whose approach have already been experienced. When thus the most extreme danger threatens those who are not unconscious of guilt, have they not need to use every means in their power to be able to meet it, to humiliate themselves one and all most earnestly and present the most inopportune prayers? The prophet therefore has scarcely begun, v. 1, to call for the appointment of a fast-day, when he falls into a long description of the threatened awful day from which it seems that hardly one even could escape: and this description is presented with such emphasis and exhaustiveness that it fills up the entire strophe, vv. 2b-11. This description is exactly fitted to attain its object of alarming the people and summoning them from their unconcern. Of course it is not the locusts themselves which as such cause all the terror, but in the last instance the guilt and the punishment, the day of Yahvé, which in the prophetic sense is to be feared: and the description

accordingly begins and ends with that. This day, however, appears to draw near with the march of the locusts, which is again threatening in the distance. Hence the horrors of such a march are described in three paragraphs: the first appearance of it in the distance and general frightfulness, vv. 1-3; then, as it draws near, the more particular looks and behaviour of these inhuman warriors, vv. 4-6; lastly, the astonishing order and fierceness of this army, eclipsing the day, which Yahvé leads, vv. 5-10 (on which description, of course, as far as it contains historical elements, the experience of the plagues which had already been witnessed had an influence, yet the imagination conceived the threatening plague as more terrible than that which was past). But here every detail adds alarm and trembling; and accordingly each of the three short strophes concludes by calling attention to the terror, the last with greatest force, which being the end of the entire picture, v. 10, sq., recurs with great effect and only in deeper colours to its beginning, v. 1, sq. In the distance the army threatens to eclipse the day, it seeming as if suddenly at mid-day twilight settled upon the mountains; and what desolation it leaves behind it, sparing nothing! v. 2, sq. When one sees and hears them closer at hand, one thinks that he sees horses, *i.e.* grasshoppers (Ger. *heupferde*=hayhorses) from their loud leaping, racing (Job xxxix. 20), and from their rattling and noise that he hears the rattling of hurrying chariots, or the crackling of wide fields of stubble on fire (borrowed from Ex. xv. 7, here as elsewhere); and their whole aspect is that of a well-organized army, v. 4, sq. (little as they are in reality that). Their ranks are even firmer and in a straighter line than those of an attacking host, since the line is immediately closed up if one or another falls by a missile (Prov. xxx. 27); and they find their way into cities and houses as irresistibly as unobservedly, vv. 7-9. Well, then, may all men tremble and *gather redness*, that is, become red as fire from sudden terror in this helplessness and confusion; even earth, heaven, and stars appear to



grow pale at their approach, as if Yahvé himself led them on, v. 10; and in reality the pealing voice, the thunder of this hidden commander, goes before them! v. 11.

III. 7. But even yet, notwithstanding every threatening danger (John xi. 22), a true return (Rom. ii. 28, sq.) is not too late in the estimation of Yahvé, who in his great mercy may yet come in the beneficial thunder-shower, and thus leave a blessing behind him (Ps. lxxv. 12), vv. 12-14. Let preparations therefore be made for a great general day of humiliation, and then let the priests solemnly pray for mercy in the hearing of the whole suppliant nation, with the hope that the total annihilation of the true community of Yahvé may not be his purpose, vv. 15-17: (comp. Mic. vii. 10, and many later imitations.) With these last words, vv. 15-17, the address recurs not only to the commencement of the previous strophe, ii. 1, but also to its proper and highest object, that it may most appropriately conclude here at its true goal.

How accurately the preparations for the fast and its ceremonies are described, ii. 1, 15, sq., may be seen in the *Alterthümer des v. Isr.* pp. 174, (148), 382 (330); 109, sq. (93), 480, (404). The priests are commanded to take their place during the solemn humiliation just before the fore-court of the temple behind the great altar of the priests' court: comp. *Hist. of Israel*, III. p. 232, 243, (III. 315, 332).

#### *Further Observations.*

What has been said above on the four kinds of locusts, i. 4, still appears to me the most probable explanation. It is worthy of note how many words almost every Semitic language has for locusts, and how rarely these languages have the same names for these creatures especially; a clear indication that the words do not belong to the oldest common property of these languages. That one of these words, according to Lev. xi. 22, אֵרֵבָה the one most commonly used in ordinary speech, may include all these four classes is not surprising: in like manner

amongst the Arabians *jarād* also represents the whole genus, although of itself it denotes the nature of the fourth only of the four stages of development of p. 120. The ancient translators, however, in fact take אֲרָבָה in the few passages in which it occurs as the *caterpillar*; according to the figure Nah. iii. 15, sq. יֵלֵךְ denotes the locust just about to fly; and in *M. תענית* iii. 5, חֲסִיל is distinguished from *Arbé* as the heavier plague. And in reality Yôél does not, ii. 25, depart from this evidently not accidental order of succession, save that in that passage he places the *Arbé* first as the generic term and in accordance with that אֲרָבָה at the end. In no case are the words placed arbitrarily.

That the woman of i. 8 can only be Ssion follows of course from the context and the profession of the orator. As a virgin bereft of her affianced bridegroom before the joy of the nuptial day mourns his death, so must Ssion lament over the loss to her temple and families of all the fruits of harvest which have not yet been gathered even. It is well known that in such cases the betrothed bride occupied the same position as the married wife (*Alterthümer*, p. 268, (231). The various applications of הוֹבִישׁ, *to blush*, in the verses 10-17 are remarkable: v. 10 and 12 and v. 17, it is used of the vine, the future must, which at present seriously spoiled cannot show itself as it were with honour, retreats and creeps away blushing or pallid, and hence אֶמְלֵל *to wither, to languish away*, said of olive and fig trees, interchanges with it: similarly הוֹבִישׁ is used of joy which cannot again show itself before men, v. 12. On the other hand, v. 11, it is employed to summon the husbandmen to blush at the immense injury which they are yet scarcely able to measure fully, and to *lament*, as the second member of the verse has it, over this deceived hope. That in v. 11 הַבִּישׁוּ and הִלִּילוּ are imperatives follows, not to mention other reasons, from the similar structure of v. 8 and v. 11, of v. 10 and v. 12, where each verse concludes with the intensifying פִּי. [§. 330.]

It follows not only from the context but also from the tone

of the language that (i. 15-20) must be taken as the words of the priests. One has but to observe how wholly unlike is the mention of the temple in v. 16 and by the prophet himself in v. 9, whilst in the appeal to the priests, v. 14, *your God's house* is in accordance with i. 13 ; ii. 14. It is true, the priests will have to speak before God in wholly different language from this ; and this the prophet finally tells them, ii. 27 : but before they pass to intercession, they may well pour out their complaint, as we have it here, with the prophet who himself in fact belongs to their number. On the other hand, it would destroy the entire connexion of the address if the prophet should here so far resign himself to lamentation, and fall into immediate prayer to God, v. 19. We can therefore only say, that the prophet puts into the mouths of the priests the feelings and lamentations which he himself certainly by no means wishes to repress.—On מַפְגֵּרוֹת, v. 17, comp. the *Dichter des A. Bs.* I b p. 166 (where *Hag.* should be read for *Hab.*) ; on the *Dag. dir.* in the word, see § 160 c.—In v. 18 the LXX. take נֶאֱשַׁם as well as נִשְׁפָּיו as ἡφανίσθησαν ; in that case נֶאֱשַׁם is the vocalisation acc. to § 138 b. But the present reading gives in this connexion the fitting sense, that the animals themselves seemed to suffer punishment, a view which the ancients often took. Only in this case the Nif. form must not denote simply *bearing punishment* but *to be obliged to bear* it, as הִירָצָה, Jer. xxxi. 19, means *to be made to know* (comp. *Dichter des A. B.* II. p. 128) : it is then at the same time more reflexive than the pure *Hof.*—Since however in this sympathy the sheep stand at a greater distance from men than the horned cattle, it is said here that they *also* must suffer.

That ii. 1-11 forms one strophe, and this ends with v. 11, appears from the fact that the end v. 11 recurs to the *day of Yahvé*, which is brought forward at the commencement also as evidently the important thing here. In v. 2 this day is denominated *a day of darkness and gloom* ; yet inasmuch as

the approach of the locusts only is intended, as appears afterwards, which may be said to darken but not to wholly eclipse the day, and since the intention is to describe their approach in the distance prospectively, the description proceeds, *a day of clouds and mist*, or still more appropriately, *as of twilight which is spread over the mountains*, for they come over the mountains also, *e.g.* towards Jerusalem, v. 5, and therefore they may be seen from afar as if semi-darkness were spread over the mountains. שָׁחַר is the word for *diluculum*, before the full morning בֹּקֶר has come. But the day thus coming is immediately made known as the *army* of locusts themselves, v. 2 *b* being immediately subjoined. Only this army as Yôél here sees it will be incomparably more terrible than at any time before. The uniquely divine character is expressed in these words, v. 2 *b*. The expression פְּלִיטָה-לוֹ v. 3 cannot mean here as in 2 Sam. xv. 14; Ezra ix. 13; Jer. l. 29 *Q'ri*, *a remnant of him*, *i.e.* one or more of his number which have been saved from imminent destruction, because the לוֹ cannot refer to the sufferers; but it must be taken like *mā lahu hīla*, *Imrialq. M.* v. 27 (*there is to him*, *i.e.* for, or rather against, him *no means*, no escape); it is usual for a conqueror in mercy to permit a few to remain and escape, but this one has not even such a final clemency.

The words קִבְצוּ פֶּאֶרֶר, v. 6, cannot mean *to draw in*, contract, *beauty*, *i.e.* become not beautiful; in that case it must at least have been *their beauty*, as in the phrase v. 10; iv. 15; פֶּאֶרֶר is a formation exactly like that of words of colour, § 157 *a*, and means *to gather burning redness*, *i.e.* to become quite red. This phrase is quoted from this place in Nah. ii. 11; and the best explanation of it is Isa. xiii. 8. They fall *around* the missile, v. 8, that is, probably many at the same time on all sides of it: and yet without breaking their ranks. בָּעַר may thus retain its primary meaning. The reason of the absence of *and* before לוֹ is given § 349 *a*. In less poetic language, the description of the locusts in Exod. x. 4-15 corresponds with ours.

It is remarkable that v. 10 commences with a third *before him*, the first two short strophes ending with it, vv. 3, 6, and now the entire final strophe of this kind commencing with it: with such dancing movement does this powerful description sweep along.

The description of the divine mercy, ii. 13, modelled upon Exod. xx. 5, is subsequently quoted from this passage in Jona iv. 2. In our passage (but not in Jona) some one, who is indeed a Postmassoret, will not take נָחַם as *part.*, but wishes to read נִחַם with the sense, *that he may be sorry*: but as this does not suit the passage in Jona so is it here also wholly wrong, because the words v. 13 describe the nature of God only, and a glance into what the future may bring first occurs in v. 14.

II. *The Promise after the day of humiliation*: ii. 18—iv. 21.

As may be gathered from the historical note, v. 18, the day of humiliation was solemnly observed; a plentiful rain-fall came soon after, v. 22; the harvest of the year might yet be looked for; and the full favour of Yahvé appeared to return to the refreshed land and absolved nation. In the prophet also a great change took place. The dark presentiment and threat which he had once uttered, were transformed into a bright outlook and cheering promise. It is true, the idea of Yahvé's strict day of judgment and punishment cannot be set aside by a genuine prophetic presentiment, inasmuch as the idea is a necessity of thought and in our prophet's day had been firmly established by his predecessors. Still, the character and time of the day may be variously conceived by the prophets, according as the moral relation of the people to it changes. Accordingly Yôél here forebodes that not only will the threatened day pass over for the nation now returning to Yahvé, the divine blessing will come, and the locust-host be scattered, but these proofs of divine deliverance and this living experience of the delivered nation will gradually kindle and confirm within it

that higher mighty spirit, which is the consummation and realisation of the theocracy as well as the strong desire of all prophecy. Without some powerful impetus, the longed for consummation cannot come, but whenever this impetus is imparted the anticipation of the possibility of the consummation may be indulged. Yôél, therefore, might consider the present turn of events and the certain moral elevation of the nation in the immediate future as a new entrance on the path which would lead to the great consummation, to that theocratic consummation without the certainty of which no genuine prophet likes to look into the future. All this is true, and yet when Yôél looked beyond the present national revival he saw great evils. They were not merely upon the surface and of recent origin, but were then old and deeply rooted. With all the greater clearness and certainty, therefore, did it come before him, that to remove these complex evils of long standing, there was first needed another general revival of the nation, without whose co-operation they could not be overcome. So far therefore he forebodes with truth, that if the higher, pure and strong spirit is enkindled in the larger section of the nation, the judgment-day, drawing nigh with its terrible tokens, will not again afflict those who have amended their lives, who in the hour of decision know whither to flee, but the Heathen especially who will not acknowledge Yahvé, and also for the reason that they continually treat his people with cruelty. Even this widest and freest glance into the great future is thus justly conditioned. The prophet's imagination dwells longest amid the national affairs only because they are more compressed and manageable; but it is down the prophetic vista of future changes that it loves to gaze, and to see how then the army under Yahvé's mighty command will not be any more the locusts against Israel, but Israel going forth from Ssion against the Heathen; and the alarming tokens of the judgment-day, will no more be directed against Yahvé's people, but against the barbarous enemies of Yahvé and his people. In such

pictures, the exact reverse of recent experience, the promise finally luxuriates, as if the provocation of the divine zeal against the Heathen, ii. 17, comp. v. 19, had been anything but fruitless.

This address contains calm joyous promise, and accordingly its strophes, in exact contrast with those of the foregoing address, are quite symmetrical in the manner of ordinary strophes. After the first has fully handled the promise as to the immediate future, in the second the prophet hastens accurately to define the fundamental condition of the removal of the more distant evils, that then in the two following strophes with greater animation he may sketch the picture of the manner in which they will actually be removed, and in the last conclude with a brief but all the more fitting picture of the general consummation. In these five strophes the whole subject is completely treated: the last one, as often acc. p. 74, is left somewhat shorter; the only thing that is unusual is, that the second also is shorter, and this must be considered when we come to it.

Then Yahvé was jealous for his land and spared his people; and Yahvé answered and said to his people:

## 1.

Behold I send you the corn and the must and the oil that you may have enough thereof, | and will make you no further a mockery among the Heathen! || and the Infernal I will remove from you, and cast into a land of drought and barrenness, | his van into the eastern sea and his rear into the western sea, so that his smell ascends; | yea his stink shall ascend because he hath done so grandly! || —Fear not O land, | rejoice and be glad, for grandly hath Yahvé done! || fear not ye beasts of the field,

for the pastures of the common spring, | for the tree beareth its fruit, fig-tree and vine give their strength ; || and ye sons of Ssion rejoice and be glad in Yahvé your God ! for he gave us the early rain for justification, | and shed for you plentiful early and latter rain first. || So the threshing-floors are filled with corn, and the vats overflow with must and oil, || and I recompense you the years which the locust, the leaping insect and the flying insect and the caterpillar devoured, | my great host which I sent upon you ; || then eat on and be filled, and praise the name of Yahvé your God who hath dealt with you wonderfully, | and never again will my people be ashamed ; || ye perceive that in the midst of Israel am I, and I am Yahvé your God and none besides, | and never again will my people be ashamed. ||

3. 2.  
1 But afterwards I will pour out my spirit over all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, | your old men will dream dreams, and your youths see visions ; || and over the men-slaves and over the women-slaves in those days will I also pour out my spirit. ||—Then I give foretokens in the heaven and on the earth, | blood and fire and pillars of smoke, || the sun will be changed into darkness and the moon into blood, | before the great and terrible day of Yahvé cometh. || And every one who calleth on the name of Yahvé will then deliver himself, for on Ssion-mountain and in Jerusalem will be deliverance, as Yahvé hath said : || but amongst the remaining ones are those whom Yahvé calleth ! ||



4.

3.

- 1 For behold in those days and in that time | when  
I shall turn Yuda and Jerusalem's fortune, ||  
then bring I all the Heathen together and lead  
them down into the valley Yosafat [*Godjudges*], |  
and plead there with them as to my people and  
heritage Israel, | which they scattered among the  
Heathen and divided my land, || and for my people  
cast lots | and gave the boy for the harlot, and the  
girl they sold for wine and drank! ||—And what  
are you to me, Tyre and Zidon and all marches of  
Philistia? | will ye repay me for a deed, or do  
something yourselves to me? soon swiftly I will  
5 turn back your deed upon your head! || Ye who  
have taken my silver and my gold, | and brought  
my best treasures into your temple, || and have  
sold the sons of Yuda and Jerusalem to the sons  
of Yavan, | in order to remove them far from their  
borders: || behold I rouse them from the place  
whither ye sold them, | and turn back your deed  
upon your head, || and sell your sons and daugh-  
ters into the hand of the sons of Yuda, that they  
sell them to the Sabeans, to the distant nation! |  
yes Yahvé hath spoken it.||

4.

- Proclaim this among the Heathen, sanctify war! |  
awake ye heroes, hither to the battle all men of  
10 war! || forge your hoes into swords, your pruning-  
knives into spears, | let the weak say: "a hero  
am I!" ||—Run and come all ye nations around  
and assemble yourselves! | thither lead down,

Yahvé, thy heroes ! || let the Heathen awake and march to the valley Yosafat (*Godjudges*) ! “for there will I sit to judge all the Heathen around !” || —Put in the sickle, for ripe is the harvest ! | come tread, for full is the press, the vats swim because great is their wickedness ! || Tumult tumult in the valley of decision ! | for near is Yahvé’s day in the  
 15 valley of decision ; || sun and moon I saw grow black, | and stars withdraw their sheen, ||— and Yahvé thunders from Ssion, and from Jerusalem sounds aloud, so that heaven and earth roar : | but Yahvé is a refuge for his people, and a fastness for Israel’s sons. || Thus will ye perceive that I Yahvé am your God, dwelling in Ssion my holy mountain ; | but Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will not again press into her. ||

## 5.

And then on that day will the mountains distil must and the hills pour down milk, and all brooks of Yuda flow with water, | and a spring will go forth from the house of Yahvé and water the valley Shittim ; || Egypt will become a waste, and Edom a waste common | for the cruelty against the sons of Yuda, in whose land they shed innocent  
 20 blood. || But Yuda will remain for ever | and Jerusalem from generation to generation ; || and I wash off their blood which I have not yet washed off, | as truly as Yahvé dwelleth in Ssion ! ||

1. The fruits of all kinds, i. 11, sq. shall flourish and the proud locusts (which have done so grandly, v. 21) be driven away, *e.g.* by a mighty blast of wind (comp. Ex. x. 19) from

the north, which drives their main division into the southern desert, where they rot and poison the air, whilst their light van is hurled into the Dead Sea and their rear into the Mediterranean. From this description it appears that the swarm of locusts came from Africa, the hindmost of them being still far to the south-west, the foremost east of Jerusalem, and the main body covering Yuda. At all events, they assume this position in the eyes of Yôél. Great things as this army may have done, Yahvé will do greater (says Yôél playing on the words), as appears already. Rejoice all ye who formerly complained! The soil, v. 21, comp. i. 8, the animals, v. 22, comp. i. 18, 20, the men, v. 23, have been refreshed by the restored succession of the early and the late rains. But to men especially this gift from heaven is a divine consecration, a sign that they will again be received *into the divine righteousness*, be considered as righteous before God (exactly like Hos. x. 12; Ps. lxxv. 6), and as such it is the first, the introductory gift of mercy, which will be followed by a second, subsequent and nobler outpouring of the holy spirit, iii. 1. Thus the first bright contrast is v. 23, and the second and subsequent one, iii. 1. Remarkable is the close conjunction of the early and the latter rains in v. 23. In ordinary seasons in these countries, it is true, they are not very far apart, since the early rain begins in the second half of November and the latter rain follows it in February or March; and hence the Arabians call it *al-wali*, *i.e.* that which is attached to, the relative as it were of the first: see the *scholia* to Tarafa's M. v. 15. However, as in that extraordinary year of Yôél, the early rain had been so long withheld by the drought, when it at last came it might seem to fall with the latter rain. The peculiarity of those countries renders the *three months before the harvest* of most importance for the corn-crop as 'Amôs remarks incidentally, iv. 7, comp. Ps. lxxv. 12. The words of 'Amôs, vii. 1, no less indicate that locusts on the other hand usually came in the late summer.

For vv. 24-27 we find the hope that the abundance which is

now growing and the happiness which is beginning to increase will last, and those who have been so marvellously preserved will for all future time acknowledge and praise Yahvé as their true and only help : which in fact then forms the spiritual transition to the perfected age of the spirit, of which the prophet immediately speaks at length. The repetition of the last member of vv. 26, 27, expresses beautifully an unending recurrence, an eternal duration ; and here at the end its effect is fine.

2. Chap. iii. That a new, higher spirit must make itself felt, the spirit of the perfected true religion, before the profound and inherited national evils can be removed ; that this spirit will certainly come, but at present has not come ; and that it cannot be gained by violence, but will come at the right time from heaven,—these are the higher truths which Yôél here utters. He does not define the day and hour of this time ; but from iv. 5-8 it appears that he looked for it in the distant horizon of the events of his age. But the primary and most certain fact for him is only this, that such a condition of purification and elevation of spirit must first come, v. 1, sq., and the clearest distinctive sign to him of this time which is to be wholly informed by the higher spirit, is that then not merely a few prophets, as was the case in his day, but all men will be full of the spirit, *i.e.* like the prophets will be moved by an immediate impulse from Yahvé and act purely in his spirit and power. But though all will be moved by the same spirit, it will still be in conformity with the native differences of men. Preserving the illustration of the prophet, the aged, *e.g.* with a weaker imagination, will have dreams merely (night-visions as Job iv. 12-21), the young will see visions in broad daylight with greater vividness. Yet still essentially the same spirit animates and elevates all alike, even the hitherto despised class of slaves of both sexes, which are specially mentioned here on account of what follows, iv. 5-8. Comp. Numbers xi. 29.—Happily every heavenly gift which a new era brings is intended *for all flesh*, for all mortals ; yet it is possible that in the par-

ticular period in which it is sent only one nation may be prepared for it; and that this is the case in the present instance, appears immediately in the course of the address. Is however a nation once prepared for it, they will not be surprised to their own destruction by a great judgment-day of God when this visits the earth, vv. 3-5. That great terrible day of the judge Yahvé may be announced by all the most alarming signs in the heaven and on the earth. Just after such terrible experience as this nation had had, these signs would appear to them as still more prodigious and fearful and in accordance with that great unparalleled day. There is blood and fire in the air (a phenomenon like that recently reported in the *Asiatic Journal*, Nov. 1838, or *Ausland*, 1839, Jan., p. 84, from India; or in Germany in Jan. 1564, described in the *Göttinger Zeitung*, 1864, Aug. 31); pillars of smoke, such as ascend from volcanoes during earthquakes; eclipses of the sun, etc. Comp. Apoc. vi. 12-17. And in this solemn crisis, the temple in Ssion alone, according to ancient oracles, will form a sure refuge for all those who call upon Yahvé: although, lest any should imagine that the mere calling on the name of Yahvé and mere formal adherence to his temple is sufficient, a second truth must be added, that to those who are saved and will enter the perfected community, they only belong whom Yahvé calls, they who are called and appointed thereto by the free divine mercy! Thus we have here for the first time the idea of the κλητοί, and it is here that the idea is quite clearly defined by the antithesis. And although from iv. 5-8, 16, sq., it appears that this is conceived with particular reference to the events of the time, the general truth still remains, that no man may boast of a right to redemption.—However, that the mere force of a new spiritual enthusiasm will not suffice, but that a time of such searching trial and severe conflict must also be gone through, in order that the elements, that in the course of time had become discordant, might be cast off, and the original sanctity might be reestablished, this is plainly what was intended to be said

further in this strophe as a preparation for the last words, iv. 16, sq. We may therefore justly suppose that in our text some sentences in this strophe are wanting to complete the thought, comp. p. 131. These words could close the strophe without going further into particulars, as is the case in the two following strophes.

3. Chap. iv. For (to say distinctly how all this, especially in its details, must be fulfilled) the long standing relations of Yuda to the Heathen cannot continue as they are, but they also call for that great crisis. Here manifest injustice has been done. In pure barbarity the Heathen have made incursions into the territory of Yuda, stolen men and sold them as prisoners to far-distant nations, shed innocent blood, which is not yet washed off, cleaving still on their hands and crying for vengeance, v. 21. And that Yahvé will turn again the fortunes of Yuda and Jerusalem, *i.e.* deliver them out of their present miserable condition and make them free and powerful again, is indeed a prophecy of an earlier age, v. 1. When the time of deliverance comes, Yahvé, it is true, will bring together the Heathen to a great battle in the valley of Yosafat, not far from Jerusalem (where Yosafat once gained a victory, 2 Chr. xx. 26; comp. *Hist. of Israel*, IV. p. 56 (III. p. 512, sq.)), as if they were about to destroy the holy city, as they had often threatened to do in former times; but the very name of this battle-field, Yosafat, (Yahvé judges!) does not merely call to mind the great successful king Yosafat, but also the judgment of Yahvé which cannot deceive, vv. 1-8. Let the battle come, then! The victory will not be doubtful, vv. 9-17, and how great will be the consummated prosperity, vv. 18-21. In commencing the description of the future decisive crisis, the prophet does not forget to indicate the unrighteousness and the contempt of the Heathen towards Israel as the reason for their correction, vv. 1-3; but the loftier warrior spirit, almost as if it were the times of David, suddenly recollecting itself, as it were, wakes up, and cannot allow a serious balancing of the deeds of the two

parties, impressed with the certainty of the only important fact, that to Yahvé alone belongs the power and decision, vv. 4-8. *And also*, if the reason of the matter is to be looked into further, *what are you to me?* do you in fact imagine you can contend with me? perhaps *you will requite me* for an imagined *injury*, (e.g. the former victory of David and the religion of Yahvé over you, which you foolishly consider an injustice and injury, exactly the same as Ps. ii.), *or*, letting the past rest, do you wish to *do something for me even*, of your own prompting, from pure hardihood? But in whatever light you take your deed, whether as requital of an imaginary wrong, or unprovoked injury to me, *swiftly* will I fling it back upon your own head, so that it will strike your head and life (Ps. vii. 17), because you carried the gold and precious things that were in my temple, really therefore my treasures (not quite the same as Mic. ii. 9), into your idol-temple, and with intentional severity sold the captive Jews as far north-west as the Ionians! Amos i. 6, sq.; Zech. ix. 13. But those whom you imagine you have banished for ever from their country, will quickly return under the influence of that higher spiritual enthusiasm, iii. 1; and then when you have been overcome in battle, you may see your captives marched away far to the south-east, to the southern Arabians (Matt. xii. 42)!

4. No fear therefore! And in spirit the prophet is already most animated, as if he himself were taking part and urging everything, following the whole course of this great coming battle, just as if it were now fought before his eyes, and as though he would bring the hearers into the scene itself as he himself is there in spirit. Proclaim this, (how little we fear and how we are waiting to give them battle) among the Heathen! Hallow, ye priests, the coming conflict! Ye warriors all, hither and arm yourselves without fear! v. 9, sq. With equal vigour the prophet turns, v. 11, sq., to the enemies, that they may only hasten into that valley whither Yahvé may lead down his valiant ones, (Judges v. 13), where he will give deci-

sion. Now both sides are opposed: but the victory cannot waver; the sin and punishment are ripe; only put in the sickle, or rather tread the vat full of much blood, because the sin is so great! v. 13. But beyond measure is the confusion of the multitudes in the valley of decision (quoted Isa. x. 23; xxviii. 22), precisely because Yahvé will appear here at last as the judge of *all*, because Yahvé's day draws hither with all its alarming signs, whilst at the same time it appears where the true refuge is, and that here must arise an eternally inviolable sanctuary! vv. 14-17, acc. 3, 5. The *strangers*, v. 17, is manifestly a reference to Shishaq and to the last conquest. 2 Chron. xxi.

5. Then there will never again be such a scarcity as at present, as the prophet says, v. 18, beautifully recurring to the opening, i. 10, 20; but the hills even will flow down with wine and milk, all small streams which at other times quickly dry up will never fail again, and a spring from the Temple will water the districts, at present unfruitful, unto the outskirts of the land, to the desert valley of Shittim (the Acacia valley on the Jordan), *Hist. of Israel*, II. p. 210, (II. p. 296). (Comp. the subsequent elaborations of this picture, Zech. xiv. 8; Ezek. xlvi. 1-12; Apoc. xxii. 2.) But, in contrast with this, the countries of injustice and cruelties will lie desolate, v. 19. Not so the land in which, after that judgment, righteousness rules, as true as Yahvé the God of Ssion lives! v. 20, sq. Yôél could have sketched his pictures of the final idealisation and perfection of earthly affairs in many other ways; and from what an entirely different point of view he speaks in the passage mentioned p. 114! But only those pictures have come before his mind which were prompted by the entire connexion of his address and his feeling at that time; and reflection upon the foreign disgrace of the kingdom, which so strongly predominates throughout the whole oration, appears once more bitterly enough even at the very end, v. 21.



Still Yôél's speech is clearly enough ended with this passage : and it follows therefore that the words mentioned above, p. 114, are from another book of his.

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The doubtful word **הַצִּפְנִי**, ii. 20, can in this connection denote nothing else than the locust-host, especially the main division of it ; in what way, however, "the northern," according to the Massoretic vocalisation, can be an intelligible denomination of that kind does not appear. The word cannot mean that these locusts have come from the north : on the contrary, they came, as we saw, from the south, as indeed locusts generally do in those regions (whilst according to Anderson's *Reisen* [Leipzig, 1858], II. pp. 21-25, they advance in south-west Africa always from the north). Retaining this vocalisation, we should have, therefore, to suppose that "the northerner" stood proverbially for barbarian, savage (which is not probable among the Hebrews of that period) ; or that **פְּנִים**, the front, is the eastern wing, **סוּף**, the end, is the west, or hinder wing of an army, which it would be difficult to establish. Since the locusts are throughout conceived as a well disciplined army, one might be led to a vocalisation, **צִפְנִי** (like **צִפְעִנִי**), "the man of the host," from the root **צָף**, which in Arab. and Aram. bears the meaning of rank, battle array. But since I have proved in the *Hist. of Israel*, II. pp. 12, 69, (II. pp. 18, 100), that **צִפְנִי**, not the same word as **צָפוֹן**, denotes the *Typhon*, the most probable meaning in our passage is the *Typhonian*, i.e. pretty nearly our *Infernal* ; and this is the more probable inasmuch as the locusts, as was said above, p. 135, actually came from the desert bordering on Egypt. In the Apocalypse again, the locusts come similarly out of Hell.

The word **וְהָעֵל**, ii. 20, it is best to take as uttered with the full energy of the will in order to bring out the reason following.—That **לִצְדָקָה**, ii. 23, cannot mean *in right measure* with

reference to the rain is as clear from the usage of the language as that the bare word, *in the first*, in the same place cannot denote the first month; both renderings would also be most unpoetical. Comp. Ps. lxxv. 6.

On the idiom iv. 1, comp. the *Dichter des A. Bs.* III. p. 309.

It is not at all likely that the South Arabians, Ez. xxvii. 19, which are much more accurately distinguished, are intended by the *Y'vanîm* (Ionians). The South Arabians only, iv. 8, are distinguished as a very distant nation, since at that time it was much easier to go by ship to the Ionians by means of the Phœnicians than by land to the Sabeans.

On the imperative נִקְבֹּצִין, iv. 11, for according to the context it can only be an imperative, see § 226 c. עוֹשׁ is probably = חוֹשׁ.

The last sentence, iv. 21, with -י, is evidently an oath, with which the whole suitably closes, as Amos ix. 5; Hos. xii. 6, and Arab. *wa*, with the genitive, comp. Ps. lxxxix. 38; Deut. xxxii. 31. We have here the origin of this later in Arab. very much curtailed idiom. It is really a condition-sentence: since Yahvé is—, or, as surely as he is—, by Yahvé. The ancient translators had already become unacquainted with this. Comp. Gram. § 340 c.

The reading הִרְפִּיתָ רָעֵב, *to the hunger-reproach*, ii. 19, in many MSS. and the Targ. is worthy of note: it is only too unpoetical, and may owe its origin to a later bit of wit.

## 2.

### ANONYMOUS PROPHETS.

All inquiries lead to the conclusion that the three Oracles concerning foreign nations which Yesaya repeated and reproduced in one of his own works, Isa. ch. xv. 1-9; xvi. 7-12; xxi. 11, sq.; xxi. 13, sq. belong to this early period. They are of special importance, inasmuch as they are the oldest Oracles concerning foreign nations that remain to us, and

probably all three are from a prophet of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. But inasmuch as we possess them only as Yesaya wove them more or less closely into his own book, it will be best to explain them when we come to that.

Hosea also, vii. 12, purposely refers his hearers to an earlier Oracle, and, from the connexion of his words one might think, to a universally known Oracle of an ancient prophet. This Oracle was probably from the first period of the division of the kingdom of David, when there was the desire, both in Yuda and in Israel, to call in the help of foreign nations. We can suppose that a famous prophet spoke so successfully against this that the desire was wholly abandoned, and in future times this Oracle was gladly appealed to against a similar crooked policy.

## II. PROPHETS OF THE INTERMEDIATE PERIOD.

### 1.—BEFORE YESAYA.

#### 1. 'AMÔS.

1.—'Amô<sup>s</sup> was an inhabitant of Thekoa,\* a simple, plain man, dwelling in that not richly fruitful district of the south of Yuda, in which pastoral pursuits, with but little cultivation of arable land, must have formed the chief occupation of the people. He was a shepherd (comp. i. 1, with 7, 14, 15), occupied in addition with the cultivation of sycomores, vii. 14. The few simple objects of this country life had deeply and exclusively impressed themselves upon his strong and healthy imagination. Among the prophets we do not meet another who presents illustrations from country life with such freshness and vividness, and in such exhaustless wealth. And this peculiarity of his daily life and of his mode of viewing things, visible enough in his numerous comparisons and peculiarly prophetic illustrations, extends, in fact, into the finest veins of his thought and language. Various solecisms in pronunciation and ortho-

\* The aspirate *th* pronounced *t*.

graphy also point to an author not of the ordinary type, who did not spring from Jerusalem, the centre of the culture of that time. *E.g.* the pronunciation הֶעִי for הֵעִי, ii. 13; מתעב for מתעב, vi. 8; נִשְׁקָצָה for נִשְׁקָה, viii. 8 (unless this is a later copyist's error); בושם for בוסם, v. 11;--the orthography דויד, vi. 5; ix. 11; יִשְׁחָק, vii. 16; also מסרף, vi. 10 for משרף, ii. 1; iv. 11. On the other hand, it would be a great mistake to suppose his being a husbandman, presupposes less knowledge and cultivation with respect to the higher concerns of life. In those times and regions knowledge and culture did not belong so exclusively to classes as now with us; and least of all in ancient Israel could such an inequality in spiritual matters have arisen at so early a period, since there was granted to this people not only absolute community in these spiritual blessings, but also the right to seize and apply them with independent action in any wise manner. Any man moved by the spirit of Yahvé might in the old community come forward as a prophet and perform whatever the true spirit really urged him to do. And inasmuch as this law had been acknowledged from the earliest times, the division of the two kingdoms could not at least legally prevent any one who might feel himself, under the influence of the spirit, called upon to come forward in the sister-kingdom. Accordingly we see 'Amôs suddenly coming forth from his retirement in the south of Yuda to go as prophet to Bethel, a centre of idolatry in the northern kingdom, in order there, in the centre of the errors of the kingdom of Israel, to lift up the warning and threatening voice of Yahvé with all fearlessness.

2. We do not know, and it is of little consequence that we should know, what particular occasion and what report so affected the mind of 'Amôs that he felt called to go to Bethel as prophet. It is enough for us that in the northern kingdom such occasions were not wanting. All indications point to the first half of the long reign of Yarob'am II. as the time; when, on the one hand, this warlike king had completed his extensive

conquests in the north and east (vi. 14, comp. ii. 3 ; 2 Kings xiv. 25), and, on the other hand, the Assyrians, who towards the end of his reign had already drawn much nearer to Palestine, Hos. ch. i. sq., were still at a great distance, not having yet conquered Kalneh beyond the Euphrates (vi. 2 ; comp. Isa. x. 9), or excited the least fear in Israel. It is true, 'Amôs has a distant knowledge of them and looks forward to the irruption of a rude warlike people from the north for the chastisement of all neighbouring nations (comp. especially i. 5, and vi. 14) ; still he never mentions the Assyrians by name, and the supposition is, they were still little known and considered in Palestine. Throughout the whole book of 'Amôs it is apparent that the northern kingdom stood then at the summit of power, wealth, security, and luxury. But this very pride and security, together with the growing luxury of the magnates who had been demoralized by war (ii. 14-16 ; vi. 13), was the seductive cause of grievous oppressions in this kingdom. Refusals of justice became general ; and under such arbitrariness the richer commercial people could easily oppress the less favoured ones (viii. 4-6). From this loosening of all social bonds, great commotions and disturbances had already arisen in the capital (iii. 9, sq.). But what especially promoted this demoralization was idolatry, carried on quite publicly and with most shameful ceremonies (ii. 7, sq.) especially in Bethel. Here there seems to have been the chief temple, and the king had probably taken up his summer residence here (vii. 13, comp. iii. 15). Other seats of idolatry were in Gilgal, Dan, Samaria, and in Beérshéba in the extreme south (iv. 4 ; v. 5, 26 ; viii. 14). In spite of this, there was no desire wholly to give up the ancient Yahvé-cultus, and it was still observed for state reasons often with splendid sacrifices (v. 14, 21-23 ; comp. 2 Kings xvii. 21, sq.) ; but this was a cultus that was to some extent not voluntary but compulsory, and was also too sensuous, without either penitence or enthusiasm.\* With the dis-

\* In what the degeneracy of the Jahvé-cultus consisted, and why the idolatries

solution of the constitution of the kingdom, the genuine ancient religion gradually and increasingly declined; and, which was the worst form of this evil, the genuine prophets of Yahvé had been long ago banished from this kingdom (vii. 12), so that every possibility of amendment seemed therewith to be cut off. But at this point that ancient higher law came in with its authority, and could not be superseded by any modern and arbitrary one. 'Amôs impelled by the spirit of Yahvé came to the daring resolve to go from Yuda to the centre of idolatry in the northern kingdom, there to proclaim the word of eternal truth against such perversities, and there, where everything was lawless life and boisterous joy, to announce a near destruction as a divine necessity. Full of mournful presentiments as to the future of this kingdom as his mind must have been, and with these presentiments gathered into fixed pictures or visions as was the case with the prophets, he came forward here before the assembled people with the explanation of his solemn visions (chap. vii.). How long, however, he laboured here in Bethel, or elsewhere in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, probably in Samaria itself (acc. ch. iii. sq.), we do not now know with certainty: from many indications, his labours here were not of very short duration. This at least is certain, that the truth and force of his word were already working throughout the whole kingdom when the chief priest of Bethel, with Yarob'am's permission, compelled him to flee. And he went back to Yuda with dignity and fearlessness, yielding only to rude force.

3. It must have been some time later, after he had returned to Yuda, that he composed this book. For the memory of this last sin of the northern kingdom, which he had himself so deeply felt in his own person, this impious quenching of the spirit and utter contempt of the prophetic Oracle, is echoed

were especially associated with the above cities, is more particularly explained in the *Hist. of Israel*, pp. iv 25, sq., 125, sq., 2. sq., I. 305, sq. (III. pp. 470, sq. 606, 439 sq., I. 437, sq.)

everywhere in this book; in fact, it forms one of the main thoughts of all he says, and is brought forward with great emphasis (ii. 12; iii. 1-8; iv. 13; v. 10, 13, 18; vi. 3: comp. viii. 11-14; ix. 10). And then the book here and there has also a reference to Yuda, where similar perversities prevailed, if not to the same extent (iii. 1, sq.; vi. 1, 11). The book was therefore written some time subsequent to the delivery of the orations, with a free hand and for more general designs. When 'Amôs could no longer himself speak on the spot, he sought to accomplish his object by means of this book, which although it concerns not the northern kingdom alone is still directed to this much more than to the southern.\* And in accordance with this, the book falls into three parts. In the *first*, ch. i.-vi., the main section of the present entire book, the threat, the reproof, and the mournful presentiment, are poured forth without let or hindrance in their whole length and breadth upon the follies of men, especially of the Israelites in the northern kingdom. From beginning to end a magnificent plan is evident, the design of which is to exhaust the entire matter, to bring forward all the follies, the reproofs and threats, and to collect all the reasons for and against. We have here therefore a great oration, the plan and execution of which rests upon a great prophetic principle, which appears for the first time here in 'Amôs, and also in a perfectly developed form. In later prophets it is very frequently and in various forms repeated. ✓

This great principle is, that just as in all the actions of the true God righteousness rules always and alone, so also the divine punishments of all human rebellion follow only according

\* The names Israel, Yakob, and sometimes Isaac, are in 'Amôs primarily denominations of the northern kingdom, which in some places (v. 6, 15; vi. 6) he calls still more definitely Yoseph, since the first denominations, where the connexion admits of it, may also comprehend the entire nation. The name *sons of Israel* denotes with but little variation the existing, individual Israelites, iii. 1, 12; iv. 5; ix. 7. The name *house of Israel* refers to the community, and, inasmuch as this was established in ancient times, may often have reference to the past, v. 1, 3, 4, 25; vi. 1, 2, 11, 14; vii. 16; ix. 8.

to the same righteousness. This principle had been supplied with true religion itself, from the time of Moses, as the most sure conviction of the community possessing this religion; and very early justice had been administered in conformity with it in a highly developed manner.\* In the light of this principle our prophet with equal truth and vividness sees the future of the nations unroll itself before his eyes; and it is as if through all the prophetic pictures and presentiments we were permitted to see into the heart of the administration of justice in this ancient nation, only that here, as everywhere with our prophet, the utmost simplicity prevails. As there are three stages in the procedure of a well-constituted court of justice; 1, the announcement of the offence committed, and the threat to the criminal; 2, the judgment according to witnesses and proofs, and the condemnation; 3, the execution of this, attended perhaps with loud lamentations over the necessity of such punishments;—so this great section, with regard to all details which 'Amôs wishes here connectedly to handle, falls into three smaller subsections, (1) ch. i. sq. is shown that the divine punishment, if it becomes necessary, must fall upon the kingdom of the Ten Tribes equally with all other sinful kingdoms and the small Yuda; (2) ch. iii. sq. with special reference to Samaria, the necessity of the divine condemnation of this kingdom is most fully established; so that, (3) chap. v. sq., finally, with reference to both kingdoms, there can only follow a purely prophetic lamentation over those who have received the divine sentence.

This summary of contents is sufficient to show that we have here a production designed for a book the draught of which is discernible here. The smaller *second* section, vii. 1—ix. 6, then narrates, as if to serve at the same time for an explanation and confirmation of the first section, the history of the prophet at Bethel with the visions which he had there publicly made known before the assembled people; and at the close leads back by a suitable transition to the matter of the first section,

\* Comp. the *Alterthümer des Volkes Israel*. p. 414, 3rd edition (359, 2nd edition).



and in such a manner that it ends with the strongest and most telling picture of the inexorable punishment of sinners, as if the terrible earnestness of these two sections of the book were wholly centred there. Thus in these sections is heard only the solemn voice of threatening and certain destruction of such disorderly kingdoms. Yet the thought of the complete and lasting destruction of Israel as the true community is insufferable and untrue. Accordingly, at this extreme crisis, the necessary Messianic hope of improvement and perfection after such chastisement is heard with all the greater strength, and thus in a *third* section follow cheering prospects of the great unending future, ix. 7-15.—Herein lies also the proof that this little book forms a whole complete in itself, and that it left 'Amôs' hands just as we have it. The heading only is probably from another, but in any case early, hand; a *hiatus* of some length probably occurs after iv. 3; and a transposition at v. 7-9.

In his style 'Amôs shows a preference for short, disjoined, simple sentences, which is the true antithesis of a speaker's style. He very rarely continues the same thought in long, complex sentences. On the contrary, his thought advances by numerous new starts, and each smaller oracle often begins with, "*Thus saith Yahvé,*" and closes with the same. In his simplicity, although he came later than Yôél and copies much from him, 'Amôs still gives us decidedly the picture of a new kind of prophecy just as it is originating, which, as if in conflict with all the world, deals with every subject with the utmost simplicity and yet as weightily and decisively as possible. Nevertheless, in the succession and order of the thoughts in their whole connexion, there is incisiveness and firmness, finish and beauty. The peculiar simplicity of 'Amôs's style shows itself in his reviewing in a set series of brief sentences the various possible cases that are revealed to his prophetic spirit, and describing in order a defined circle of events in all their particular possibilities, in all their consequent differences and similarities. But the simplicity which he observes in this

manner is necessarily broken up into beautiful rhythmical relations, thus combining with the most unadorned simplicity the charm of dancing melody and resonance, ch. i.-ii. ; iv. 6-11 ; vii. 1-9 ; viii. 1-3. And it is evident that it is the number five within the circumference of which the prophet likes to pour forth the stream of his discourse (most clearly iv. 6-11 ; then the five visions vii. 1—ix. 6, and the memberment of five strophes ch. iii. sq. and ch. v. sq.) ; although he is at home within the limits of the number seven, ch. i. sq.

If one examines the characteristics of 'Amôs's style, it is apparent that not only are illustrations from simple rural life, as was observed above, more natural to him than to any other prophet, but it may be asserted that he also, in the exactly opposite direction, seeks as no other the most sublime illustrations and the most uncommon descriptions of the divine attributes, and combines them in such a rich abundance as no one else can command. This he does at a place where he considers an oath suitable, ix. 5, sq. The oath is here not new, for Yôél concludes his book with a similar one (see p. 140) ; but new is the uncommon wealth and variety of the descriptions of the incomparable nature of God. This occurs again, iv. 13 ; v. 8, sq. It is also worthy of note that 'Amôs speaks comparatively much about foreign kingdoms, and in fact refers in the midst of his addresses to the condition of kingdoms old and new of that time more frequently and more definitely than any other prophet, ch. i ; vi. 2 ; ix. 7. When one considers that all this is manifestly wholly new and original in 'Amôs, we may consider this wealth of illustration, this splendour, and this wide range and extent of discourse in reference to God and the kingdoms of men, as an unexpected set-off to the general unrefined simplicity and rusticity of his words, and also as a sign that this prophet of least pretensions might very well have competed with the most learned and most eloquent writers of his time. Further, there are not wanting some pointed *paronomasie*, v. 5 ; viii. 2 ; whilst in Yôél they are fewer, and Hoséa,

again, in this respect exhibits the much earlier and finer development of letters and art in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. In other respects this prophet in his style and power of description, with all his simplicity, has such an uncommon freshness, originality, and mellowness, that it is very intelligible how his book in later times was so much and so gladly read and could so powerfully influence later writers.

I. Words of 'Amôs, one of the shepherds of Teqôa, which he as seer spoke concerning Israel in the days of Uzzia king of Yuda, and Yarob'am's the son of Yoash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake; and said:—

This heading evidently owes its origin to an ancient well-informed hand. The earthquake in Uzzia's reign, which might serve as an era for some time, is known to us elsewhere only in the later general reference of Zech. xiv. 5, whilst here it marks an era. However, since the hand of the prophet does not betray itself here, either in the words used (comp. vii. 14), or in the general character of the whole, and further the era with the entire chronological note of itself rather suggests another hand, we must be content to consider this heading to be an old truly historical tradition, without attempting to trace it further. According to pp. 94, sq. the last editor could at most have added the mention of Uzzia: comp. the *Hist. of Israel*, IV. pp. 131, sq. (III. pp. 612, sq.). Although 'Amôs calls himself בֹּיֶקֶר *cowherd*, vii. 14, and not נִזְקֵר, it is well known that βουκόλος also occurs in this more general sense.

# I. THE ORATIONS, chap. i. 2—vi. 14.

## 1. *The punishment, reaching also the northern kingdom,* i. 2—ii. 16.

Since the northern kingdom would not hear the forebodings and threatenings of evil of our prophet, and had gone so far as to send him away, his denunciatory oration has first to win for

itself a passage before it can reach this proud and hardened kingdom. At the commencement, therefore, it must start from a high and general position, with regard to which all interests are equal, and from the application of which there can be no exceptions, not even the northern kingdom. This general position is not difficult to find, for no true prophet entertains a foreboding the abstract and underlying truth of which would not apply to the most general as well as the more special cases. Perversities like those in the northern kingdom were, in fact, more or less prevalent in the neighbouring kingdoms, and 'Amôs could just as well have threatened divine punishment to one of these kingdoms as to Israel, and would have done so with equal definiteness and fulness if his mission had called for it. It is a fact, too, that a great alarm and trial does not break over one nation without alarming and trying all those surrounding nations as well which suffer from similar sins. And that God whom the prophet has in his mind, Yahvé, before whom with respect to eternal right and justice all men, kingdoms, and nations are equal, cannot be angry and express his wrath aloud in punishment, and at the same time the hidden sins of all nations not come openly to that judgment-day, and all, without distinction, not tremble at that day of reckoning. When, then, from this exalted position, 'Amôs must proclaim the severe message of his oration, that Yahvé's wrath is about to break forth over the earth, the scene of itself is presented to his mind, how all kingdoms will tremble at that wrath; and if all kingdoms, how can this northern one be excepted, since it is there that wrong, were this possible, is most crying! Thus the beginning of the book takes the form of a circular-oration, or rather a circular-oracle. The essential and at the same time most general subject recurs in a multitude of individual cases, always different in its application yet essentially the same. And thus the fundamental thought advances quite rhythmically with increasing emphasis, until its entire weight falls upon the specially important case, which is properly the aim of the whole

discourse, and with which alone it will subsequently be occupied.

The perversities of the numberless little kingdoms of that period and region supply abundant material, as various as the differences of men; and, for the sake of the round number, seven of these kingdoms are selected, which are followed by Israel, the northern kingdom, as an eighth, as if to close the series already complete enough with an extreme and absolutely last instance. And inasmuch as Israel must be the last instance, the series of the others begins with the most distant kingdom and gradually approaches Israel. First, three kingdoms of nations not at all nearly related to Israel; at the head, the people and kingdom of Damascus, least of all related; then, the Philistine people, dwelling on the opposite side of Palestine, in the south-west; and from them, again, northwards the Phœnician kingdom. Who of the inhabitants of Samaria would not gladly enough see these nations, which they disliked, suffer the threatened punishment? Then follow three kingdoms, nearly related nations, who however were also often enemies of Israel, and to learn the correction of whom would not be less pleasing than that of the previous three. In this case the series begins with Edóm, it is true, the most southern people and most nearly related to Israel, yet merely for the reason that it had already been mentioned when Phœnicia was spoken of, and after 'Ammôn and Môab it still closes this series, because its history was closely connected with that of Môab. But the seventh instance is not another heathen nation: it is Yuda and Jerusalem even. And will Samaria still claim superiority over these? The effect of this series must have been increased by its beginning with the kingdom of Damascus, which up to that time had been most inimical to the Ten Tribes, whom therefore it would flatter to hear such severe threats hurled against it. Similarly they would be flattered on hearing the threats against the six other lands, and even against Yuda, because they had been more or less in conflict with all of them. And after all

this flattering unction, suddenly the irresistible conclusion of a far more definite threat against themselves !

What is universal is divine, and the truth of universal import is here, the necessity of the approaching punishment, which must inevitably strike all perversities with the same force. This universal truth must recur in any special case, and remain the same from beginning to end. When therefore the certainty of a coming punishment from Yahvé has been expressed at the very commencement, v. 2, acc. Joel iv. 16, in the most universal terms, the discourse descends in 7-8 special oracles to particular applications, yet at the same time the universal truth constantly recurs with the same application to all cases, and accordingly the whole oration moves on in very equal strophes. In every separate oracle we hear first that Yahvé will not withdraw that great universal threat in the case of this kingdom, on account of its *three* transgressions and the *four*, *i. e.* because its known transgressions ever increase, and yet three transgressions are enough.\* Since these transgressions might be all detailed at length, the rapid circular-oracle, secondly, is satisfied merely to mention one by way of example, since they might all be sufficiently well known, yet that selected is a grievous one, if there were no more, and deserving of such punishment. And, thirdly, inasmuch as these transgressions are alike in this, that they all excite and call for the divine punishment with equal necessity, however different they may be in respect of the special condition and history of each nation, the actual execution of this punishment is described in similar terms in all cases, fire being always mentioned first as the devouring judgment, that is, the fire of war, of conquest by the Assyrians who stand in the remote background. Thus the circular-oration moves on,

\* Since the numbers 3, 7, 10, are here round numbers, the method of intensifying is either from one below or to one above them : 2-3, 3-4, 6-7, 7-8, 9-10 ; comp. Mic. v. 4 ; Job v. 19 ; Prov. vi. 16 ; xxx. 15, sq. ; Ecc. xi. 2 ; Sir. xxv. 7. Of the number 5 there is no instance. Further, the numbers in 'Amôs must always be taken as definite, since the true sense of his discourse is only thereby brought out.

with little variation in subordinate particulars, seven times in the same form, until the eighth time. Then as soon as Israel has been surprised by it, the enumeration of transgressions and the description of corresponding punishments are extended rapidly with terrible force into detail, and the special divine favours shown to Israel are mentioned, by which the transgressions are made to appear the more unpardonable and the punishments the more necessary.

- 2      *Yahvé will thunder from Ssion, from Jerusalem will peal aloud, | so that the pastures of the herdsmen will wither, and Karmel's head be parched.*

### 1.

- Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Damascus and for the four I take that not back : | because they threshed Gilead with the iron sledges !— || but send fire into Chazael's house, |  
5 which devoureth Benhadád's palaces, || and break Damascus's bars, | exterminate the inhabitants from the Sun-valley, the holder of the sceptre from the Paradise, so that Arám's nation wandereth away to Kir !—saith Yahvé.

### 2.

Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Ghazza and for the four I take that not back : | because they led away whole villages to give them over to Edóm !— || but I send fire into Ghazza's walls, | which devoureth his palaces, || exterminate the inhabitants from Ashdôd, the holder of the sceptre from Ashqalón, | and turn my hand against

'Eqrôn, so that the last Philistines perish!—saith the Lord Yahvé.

## 3.

Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Tyre and for the four I take that not back, | because they gave over whole villages to Edóm, not  
10 remembering the covenant of brothers!—|| but I send fire into Tyrus' wall, | which devoureth its palaces.

## 4.

Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Edóm and for the four I take that not back : | because it pursued its brother with war, smothering its compassion, | and its anger perpetually lacerateth, its wrath lieth continually in wait!—|| but I send fire into Tæman, | which devoureth Bossra's palaces.

## 5.

Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of the sons of 'Ammôn and for the four I take that not back : | because they ripped up Gilead's mothers, —to enlarge their border ! || —but I kindle fire in Rabba's wall, which devoureth his palaces | in noise on the day of the battle, in tempest on the day of  
15 the storm, || so that their king goeth into captivity, | he and his princes together!—saith Yahvé.

## 2.

## 6.

1 Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Môab and for the four I take that not back : | because it burnt the bones of the king of Edóm to



line ! || but I send fire into Môab, which devoureth Qerîyoth's palaces, | so that in tumult Môab dieth, in noise and trumpets sounding ; || and exterminate the judge from its midst, | killing all its princes with it !—saith Yahvé.

## 7.

Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Yuda and for the four I take that not back : | because they despised Yahvé's instruction, and kept not his laws, | causing themselves to err by their deceits which already their fathers followed !  
5 — || but I send fire into Yuda, which devoureth Jerusalem's palaces.

## 8.

Thus saith Yahvé : for the three transgressions of Israel and for the four I take that not back : | because they sell the righteous for money, the helpless for a pair of shoes,— . . . . . they who pant after dust of the earth upon the head of the bowed, and the way of the sufferers pervert ; yea the husband and his father go to the girl, to profane my holy name ; || and upon pledged clothes cast lots near my altar, and drink the wine of the mulcted in the house of their God ! ||

And yet I destroyed the Emorite before them, | him whose height was that of the cedars, and who was firm as the oaks, | destroyed his fruit above  
10 and his roots beneath ; || and I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, | and led you forty years through the wilderness, to inherit the Emorite's

land ; || and aroused many a one of your sons as prophets, and your young men as consecrated ones ; | is also this not so, ye sons of Israel ? saith Yahvé. || But ye gave to the Consecrated wine to drink, | and upon the prophets laid the charge : “ Ye shall not prophesy ! ” ||

Behold I will press you down | as the wain presses which is filled which sheaves ! || Then vanishes the refuge from the swift, and the strong will not steel\* his strength, | no hero will deliver  
 15 his soul ; || neither will the master of the bow stand, and the swift of foot will not deliver, | the rider of the horse not deliver his soul ; || also whoever thinks himself strong amongst heroes | will flee away naked on that day ! saith Yahvé.

V. 2. He will make himself heard in such a manner from his true sanctuary, in thunder and earthquake alarming the earth and announcing judgment, that the entire land in terror and astonishment loses in a moment its verdant array, from the plains of the shepherds (where 'Amôs is) in the south-east to the glorious summit of Karmel in the north-west. In this way 'Amôs transforms in his own manner the sentence borrowed from Yôél, iv. 16.

1. vv. 3-5. The kingdom of Arám, or Damascus, in those times (2 Kings x. 32 ; xiii. 22) often waged barbarous wars against Gilead, a part of the kingdom of Samaria ; barbarities which often occurred, even under the kings of Israel (comp. 2 Kings xiii. 7, with Prov. xx. 26), but were always condemned by the true prophet, since phrases like Hos. x. 11 ; Mic. iv. 13, had become purely tropical, and mean nothing more than *to conquer*. The prophet says, these barbarous Syrians, both

\* Shakespeare's Hen. V., ii. 36. “ So service shall with steeled sinews toil.”

king and people, shall be led away captive by the Assyrians, after the conquest of Damascus, to the river Qîr or Kûr in the far north, driven out of the extremely charming dwelling-places which they then possessed in On, *i.e.* Heliopolis, Gen. xli. 45, here therefore Baalbek in the valley, *i.e.* Coelosyria, and the so-called *Paradise*, a well-known district not far from Damascus, mentioned also by Strabo, xvi. 2-19, however, acc. to Ptolem. geogr. 5. 14, p. 368 (Wilberg's ed.) lying nearer *Laodicea scabiosa*. To break the bar of a city is to open and take it, as Isa. vii. 6.

2. Vv. 6-8. The little Philistine kingdoms, too weak for open war, preferred to make small inroads upon the borders of the Israelites, and often led whole villages away, which they had attacked in the night, with even their old men and children (Joel iv. 1-6). And they aggravated this barbarity by causing such Israelites to come into the hands of the Edômites, who from the ancient hatred existing between these kindred peoples treated them more hardly than any other masters. Therefore the punishment of Yahvé shall fall upon them all, even those who remain from the former rule of the Philistines, or the last (as ix. 12); first turning southward from Ssion, towards the most important of these little kingdoms, Ghazza, and from there over 'Ashkalôn, again northwards to 'Eqrôn.

3. Vv. 9-10. The Tyrians were not disposed to engage in such marauding incursions; they preferred peace and trade. But their greed of gain went so far that they traded in men's lives, and received, for instance, the captive Israelites from the Philistines to sell them again to the Edômites,—although they knew that Edômites and Israelites from an ancient blood-relationship stood towards each other in the position of brothers, and accordingly ought to have been very considerate of such an ancient and close connexion! This covenant relationship of the two nations is again mentioned immediately afterwards in v. 11, sq.

4. Vv. 11-12. We see further in the case of the brother, Edóm himself, how detestable to the prophet is enmity between closely related nations with its consequent blunting and destruction of the natural ties of blood. Shortly before, the Edómites seem to have used a favourable opportunity to undertake new incursions into the territory of the Israelites (comp. ix. 12, and Joel iv. 19), as if they would never give up their old grudge.

5. Vv. 13-15. From this it appears that a short time before the Ammonites had again resumed their old border-wars with the Israelites in Gilead (Judges xi. 4, sq.), and merely to extend their boundaries had committed barbarities on women which no prophet can justify wherever they occur. The ripping up of women with child appears to have been at that time a common rule of war, 2 Kings viii. 12; Hos. xiv. 1. On the great day of battle therefore they will fall by a still greater destroyer, the Assyrians.

6. ii. 1-3. A similar fate the prophet foresees for Moab, the relative of 'Ammôn, although at that time it had not been enraged against Israel, but against Edóm, its border-neighbour. The king of this people, Moab's enemy, who had probably fallen into its hands, it had not merely retained but with all the inventiveness of barbarity had burned his bones into lime (dust) for the purpose of casting them into the water or scattering them into the air; a means of depriving the dead of the rest of the grave, which occurs elsewhere only in the case of great criminals (comp. Jos. vii. 25). From v. 3 it appears that Moab itself had at that time no king of its own: this accords entirely with what we learn elsewhere of the great victories of Yeroboam II. (comp. vi. 14), who had left them only a vassal-prince, here called its *judge*. This judge might nevertheless carry on a war with Edóm, since Edóm was then in the condition of a tributary land of Yuda.

7. Vv. 4-7. Among the transgressions of Yuda there is none of such moment as that it again left the true God, who

had revealed himself to it from the earliest times, and was going after the false *deceiving* gods.

8. V. 6-16. With the northern kingdom the subject comes to be handled on a larger scale. In ver. 6, a transgression having been named in the former manner, we have, with a new vigorous opening, in vv. 7-8, an enumeration of four crimes :—1. Trade in men, Israelites often being taken for slaves on the ground of the most insignificant debt. Comp. viii. 6, and something similar for which the Heathen were blamed, i. 6, 9; see also the *Alterthümer des v. Isr.* p. 246, sq. (211, sq.)—2. Severity towards the unprotected before the tribunals, as if they found a pleasure in seeing those who were already unhappy enough in the deepest sorrow as sentenced criminals (with ashes upon their heads), and in casting utterly down those who were already tottering.—3. Attendance at licentious heathen sacrificial ceremonies, or others of the same kind, even by those who delighted in severe judgments, and often father and son together.—4. Casting lots in gambling by these same transgressors, when they assemble in the places where the degenerated Yahvé-cultus was performed, over the garments which they had just taken as pledges from the poor, and drinking the wine which they purchase with arbitrarily imposed fines.—The addition to *deseccate my holy name* is specially remarkable; they are members of the community of the true God, they are considered as such in the world and bear the name of their God, and yet they act as if it were their will to desecrate the holiest name that exists among men, for the world estimates their God according to their conduct. It is true, they cannot deny the merciful deeds of Yahvé in earlier and later ages, vv. 9-12. In later ages the fact, *e. g.*, that Yahvé has always aroused among them at least some solitary enthusiastic and holy men who withstand the growing depravity. But with these they carry on their mockery, as 'Amôs himself has experienced! On the *consecrated ones* (*die Geweihten*), properly the Nazirites, see the *Alterthümer*, pp. 113, sq. (97, sq.) Of Yahvé's works in

the ancient days two are quoted. That last in time is brought forward first, because just at this time, when Israel has so often shown itself weak in conflict with the other inhabitants of the land, it appears wonderful above everything that once those gigantic aborigines (comp. the *Hist. of Israel*, II. 227, sq. (I. pp. 327, sq.) sank before them like a gigantic tree dashed to pieces from top to bottom, ver. 9. The work earlier in time, and in reality of greater import, is reserved for ver. 10.—Therefore the severest punishment by means of a mighty conqueror becomes necessary, falling also upon those who in the midst of those transgressions still imagine themselves to be so strong, vv. 13-16.

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The expression *the iron threshing-sledges*, i. 3, as if those most murderous instruments were at that time as well known as cannons are now, should not be overlooked. We are too little acquainted with the military events which are so much referred to ch. i.-ii. 3; but probably all the bloody deeds of war are meant with which Chazâel, the founder of the royal house of Damascus, had rendered his reign so memorable even to Israel. See *Hist. of Israel*, IV. pp. 93, sq., 120, sq. (III. pp. 561, sq., 598, sq.) But it may be gathered from 'Amôs's words on Damascus, that king Yarob'am II. had not at that time subjugated it, 2 Kings xiv. 28. Probably the reign of Chazâel's son Benhadâd, from whom Damascus's palaces still bore their name, ver. 4, was at an end, and a descendant of him was reigning, whose name is not known to us, who might have his summer residence in the *Paradeisos*. The Massôra in their vocalization of יִסְ, ver. 5, and likewise Hez. xxx. 17, may have had in their minds the heathen temple Heliopolis as a seat of evil; yet really the vocalisation יִסְ is here more suitable. But that יִיִּץ can at the pause stand quite correctly for יִיִּץ follows from what is shown, Gram. § 93a.

*To lead away captive whole villages*, i. 6, 9, is, of course, only a free rendering. In these passages, at least, the Hebrew

words *to lead away a complete captivity* cannot be rendered literally. If the first great Assyrian captivity of the inhabitants of entire districts, 2 Kings xv. 29, had already been past, these words would have had to be differently translated; but plainly the Philistines were content to surprise only small defenceless villages and to lead captive all their inhabitants.—The *covenant of brothers*, ver. 9, cannot refer to Israel and Kanáanites or Tyrians: Israel and Kanáan were never considered as brothers, still less spoken of as such by a prophet; the friendly relations that existed between Davíd and Solômo and on the other side the Tyrian kings (see *History of Israel*, III. 137, sq. 226, sq. (III. pp. 187, 306, sq.) never extended so far that these nations could be thought of as brothers. If it is asked, why in this place particularly that fact is singled out for mention, that the Tyrians allowed themselves to be agents between the Philistines and Idumeans in the sale of slaves from Israel, while they were this for all nations, as 'Amôs knew from Yôél as well as other sources, the only answer that can be given is, that 'Amôs desired to give prominence to the special barbarity which the Tyrians practised in selling the slaves which they had thus obtained from Israel to these Idumeans before all other nations, although they knew that Idumeans and Israelites had been brother-nations from ancient times. Hence the form of the prophet's expression, *they remembered not the covenant of brothers*, what the mutual life between brothers or brother-nations ought to be. There can be no doubt about the meaning of his words, ver. 9, for in ver. 11 the same idea is again brought forward.

The vocalisation שְׁמֵרָה acc. § 249 *b*, presupposes a שְׁמֵרָה, as if the meaning were, *his wrath—he retained it always*, let it never go and would not become placable. But then to restore the parallelism of the two members, the first would have to be taken *he nourished constantly his anger*, a meaning of טָרַף which cannot be established. It is better, therefore, on account of the harmony of the members, if for no other reason,

to read שְׁמִרָה from שְׁמִר in the sense of to *lie in wait*, as in Job xxiv. 15; Ps. lvi. 7.—The position of the two towns, ver. 12, which were evidently at that time the most important belonging to the Idumeans, still remains doubtful. If Bossra is the town of this name situated in the north-east, *Geschichte des v. Isr.*, IV. p. 409, Tæmân might also be the town which lay in that district and continued to be of such importance afterwards as *Taymâ*; Inkût, in the first (now published) volume of the great Lexicon of Topography, knows no other. In that case we should have to suppose that the Idumeans from the earliest times had spread themselves with a wide circuitous sweep as far north-east. But Hab. iii. 3, points most distinctly to a place in the south-east of Kanâan; and the name *Bossra* is so common that there might well be a place of this name in the south-east also; in fact, a place *Bossaira* has in our day been rediscovered south-east of the Dead Sea and below the place called תִּפְל in Deut. i. 1.

It is remarkable that Yéremyá xlix. 3, comp. ver. 1, quoting 'Amôs i. 15, has מְלָכָם instead of מְלָכָם and פְּהָנָיו *his priests* instead of הָרוּא, the LXX also making the latter change. Were this the sense, the prophet would be speaking of leading captive the Ammônite idol Milkom (comp. *Hist. of Israel*, III. 297 (III. p. 407), with his priests and princes. Now, although the leading away of such a great splendid idol-image would accord well with what 'Amôs says, v. 26, yet in this passage words with such a meaning would not be sufficiently apposite. In all these seven short oracles the same phrases and fundamental thoughts occur, but at the end in all cases it is the punishment of the people themselves that is spoken of, and never of the particular gods of the people: specially alike are the words ii. 3 and i. 5. We have here, therefore, a clear instance how early 'Amôs's words were variously understood and transformed: for in certain MSS. the reading of the LXX may have found its way into this passage as early as Yéremyá's day.



Since the name Moab, ii. 2, manifestly denotes the entire country, comp. ver. 5, the following *Qerîyoth* must then have been considered the principal city of Moab. We may therefore suppose that it is only another name for 'Ar-Moab, as in the oldest passage, Num. xxi. 28, and as late as Isa. xv. 1, this capital is called, although, Jer. xlviii. 24, it is mentioned only in the midst of many other cities. In fact, that oldest name 'Ar-Moab does not appear at all in the long list of Moabite cities, Jer. xlviii. The prophecy, however, which Yesaya, ch. xv. sq., repeats is certainly older than 'Amôs. There is therefore no difficulty in the supposition that *Qerîyoth* at least in 'Amôs's day was the capital.

In ii. 6-8, it is quite clear that the prophet purposely enumerates *four* transgressions of this kingdom also, as if he wished to show that in this case especially nothing might be passed by in silence, whilst he could enumerate many more of its transgressions (and subsequently actually does enumerate them) than he considers necessary at this point.—How proverbial the phrase about *a pair of shoes* is, ver. 6, may also be seen in Spence Hardy's *Eastern Monachism*, p. 161.—That the defendant appeared in court in mourning garments, is well known (*Altherthümer des v. Isr.* p. 415, (359,)) where under (2) should be read Ps. cix.); when he was condemned he might therefore appear further *with dust upon his head*. To bring the helpless to this, was the aim of these thoughtless men, according to ver. 7 *a*. And that customs of legal tribunals are meant appears also in the following member, *bending* or making crooked *their way*, since justice is the straight way. Comp. with v. 12, Isa. x. 1, and many other passages.—The clothes of the poor, ver. 8, might be pledged for so short a time that they would easily become the property of the creditor, or the creditors might assume that they were their own. That insolent wealthy people, when they are together in idleness, amuse themselves with casting lots for their garments is bad enough; but it is still worse that they do this even at their dissolute sacrificial feasts. The word

הִפָּח cannot mean *to recline*, as if it came from הִפָּח = κλίνει; the sin here is much greater: it can have the meaning *cast lots*, just as הִפִּיל, 1 Sam. xiv. 42, has with equal brevity. According to its primary meaning it corresponds most nearly to the Germ. *Karten legen*.

To understand the figure ii. 13, the essential thing is to remember, that עֲגָלָה, the simplest form of carriage, according to its root is only a *wheeled* vehicle, which unloaded flies over an object without doing it serious injury, but loaded, as in this passage, may severely injure, indeed, crush and annihilate it. If the figure is used of God, strong as it is, it can only mean, that when he comes it will not be to pass over lightly and mercifully, as for instance at the *Pascha*, but to drive over the guilty in such a manner that they will feel as if the wheels of the heaviest carriage drove over them. This figure may be rare, yet it says only what 'Amôs v. 13, or what Yesaya with others, says, xxviii. 18-20.—On קל and לבו vv. 15, 16, see Gram. § 288 c. That the first מִלֵּט in ver. 15 receives its supplement in נִפְשׁוּ is self-evident from the sentence in which it stands; and it would have been anything but an improvement to repeat it.

2. The *sentence of condemnation*, in spite of and because of the refusal to hear, ch. iii.-iv.

After this preparatory announcement and general warning, the proper address concerning Israel, that is especially the Ten Tribes, really commences: it summons with great confidence those to hear to whom it has gained the right further to speak (iii. 1, 2): it shall now be seen whether they are guilty or not! True, they will not hear the truth, the presentiment and threat of evil, and endeavour by force to prevent its utterance. But that the true prophet speaks by mere accident and from a partial view of things, without a deep divine impulse, and

without there being in reality a great and divine judgment in secret preparation which had been fore-felt by the finer and quicker sense of the prophet only,—this can be imagined only on the supposition that there is no invisible concatenation of cause and effect, but that all that is is on the surface and accidental. The opposite conclusion is the true one, therefore, that when the true prophet appears and speaks a great danger must really be near. If this is generally true, as it is shown to be, iii. 3-8, beautifully, and in language that from the calmest beginning waxes into fire, is it not especially Samaria to which it applies? There the perversities and wrongs are so evident and so monstrous, and therefore the divine punishment so certain! There even the women are so corrupted! iii. 9—iv. 3.

We have here the heart of the matter; the main theme is touched; the style becomes most animated and the language terrible. Yet it cannot be doubted that after iv. 3 there is a considerable hiatus. With the change of subject to the women of Samaria, iv. 1, a new strophe clearly commences: this cannot be ended with the few words iv. 1-3; and, on the other hand, we have no transition to the words iv. 4, sq. From the context we can supply the sense of this hiatus with a good degree of certainty. Since forcible abduction by a conqueror is announced to the luxurious women, iv. 2, sq., it might be also proclaimed to them and their husbands, how little the heterogeneous idolatry to which they had resigned themselves with increasing zeal and in growing numbers, would help them: which would form the best transition to the commencement of a fourth strophe, iv. 4-11. In this strophe it is the want of repentance which the thunder of the divine accusation is aimed at; and where the whole bitterness of scorn which lies in the matter itself breaks out. Has then the idolatry which Israel so greatly prefers been of service to it? Alas, no! With it the evils and weaknesses of the nation only grew more numerous, as if the true God himself wished thus sensibly to punish them for their neglect of him, making his true cha-

racter thus feelingly known to them even against their will: for whoever is so smitten by calamity that at the same time he is without the true God feels the misfortune quite otherwise than the Faithful do. It refers him, it compels him to look, to what is failing in his life, and from the want of which precisely his calamities are to him so heavy, seeming to be sent to him with a purpose from the true God. Therefore the less Israel would know of Him, so much the more suffering from Him as precursory punishments. And inasmuch as these have not produced true repentance and serious amendment, that most heinous of all sins, impenitence, is added to the rest to openly declare the necessity of the final divine punishment, and therewith the condemnation of him who stands accused before the divine tribunal; and this is done in the last strophe, iv. 12, sq., with a brevity that adds to the emphasis.

Into these five symmetrical strophes the great judicial action falls; the last only is somewhat shorter, as often happens, and its brevity adds greatly to the effect. The first is merely a kind of prefatory word, introducing the proceedings. The three following establish the three main counts: 1, unrighteousness in the civil government; 2, luxuriousness coupled with idolatry; 3, impenitence. Each of these serious transgressions is sufficiently deserving of a corresponding final punishment from heaven; which in the case of the first of them, iii. 11-15, is very distinctly expressed, and begins to be shown in the case of the second, iv. 2, sq. But it is especially the last, the stiff-necked impenitence, with the description of which the fourth strophe is filled, that calls for judgment. So that the final sentence with respect to the whole can follow with the greater brevity in the fifth strophe.

The entire oration everywhere refers primarily to the Ten Tribes only; which is in accordance with the plan of our prophet's book; but it is needful to be borne in mind, that the very first words, iii. 1, sq., for instance, may not be misunderstood.

3. 1.

1 Hear this word which Yahvé speaketh against you  
 ye sons of Israel! (—against the whole generation  
 which I led up out of Egypt saying: || “only you I  
 know before all generations of the earth: | therefore  
 I will punish upon you all perversities!”) || Do two  
 walk together except they arrange? || roareth the  
 lion in the forest and he hath no prey? | doth the  
 young lion make himself heard from his den, except  
 5 he seizeth? || falleth a bird upon the snare to  
 the earth, and hath no net? | is a snare drawn  
 up from the ground, and it doth not catch? ||  
 Or is the trumpet blown in a city, and the people  
 not take alarm? | or happeneth a calamity in a city,  
 and Yahvé hath not done it? ||—No, the Lord  
 Yahvé doeth nothing | without revealing his secret  
 to his servants the prophets; || the lion roareth—  
 who should not fear? | the Lord Yahvê hath spoken  
 —who not prophesy?

2.

Cry it over the palaces in Ashdod, and over the  
 palaces in the land of Egypt | and say: Gather you  
 to the mountains of Samaria | and see the many  
 tumults in her midst and the oppression in the  
 10 heart of her! || and how they know not to act  
 uprightly, saith Yahvé, | they who heap up cruelty  
 and injustice in their palaces. ||—Therefore thus  
 saith the Lord Yahvé: distress and environment of  
 the land! | and he bringeth down from thee [O  
 Samaria,] thy fortresses, plundered are thy palaces!||

Thus saith Yahvé: as the herd rescueth from the lion's mouth two shinbones or a piece of an ear, | so will the sons of Israel rescue themselves, who sit in Samaria upon the corner of a bed, upon the velvet-cushion of a couch! || Hear and testify it, Yakob's house, | saith the Lord Yahvé, the God of Hosts: || on the day when I visit Israel's transgressions upon him, | visit Bethel's altars, and the altar's horns smitten off fall to the earth: || then will I smite the winter house with the summer house, | so that the houses of ivory perish, and many houses have an end! saith Yahvé. ||

4.

3.

1 Hear this word ye Bashan's-cows upon the mountain of Samaria, | ye who afflict the suffering, crush the helpless, | ye who say to your masters: "bring that we may drink!" || The Lord Yahvé sweareth by his holiness: behold days come upon you, | when one taketh you up with hooks, and your last ones with fisher's-thorns! || and the ruins ye will forsake every one by herself, | and cast the Rimona upon the mountain! saith Yahvé.

\* \* \* \* \*

4.

5 Go to Bethel and sin, to Gilgal—sin still more, | and bring of a morning your sacrifices, every three days your tithes! || and offer incense from the leavened thank-offering, and proclaim aloud free-will offerings! | for thus it liketh you, Israel's sons! saith the Lord Yahvé. ||—But also *I* gave you clean-

ness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: | *and still ye returned not to me!* saith Yahvé. || But also I withheld from you the rain within three months to the harvest; | I rain upon one city but upon the other city I do not rain, one field is rained upon yet the other whereupon it raineth not drieth up, || and two or three cities wander to one city to drink water, and are not satisfied: | *and yet ye returned not to me!* saith Yahvé. || I smote you with parching and yellow blight, your gardens and vineyards and fig and olive trees the locust devoured most: | *and yet ye returned not to me!* saith Yahvé. || I sent a thoroughly Egyptian plague upon you; | killed your warriors with the sword also to the taking away of your horses, and caused the stench of your camp to come up even into your nostrils: | *and yet ye returned not to me,* saith Yahvé. || I overturned among you as God overturned Sodom and Gomora, and ye were like a brand rescued from burning: | *and yet ye returned not to me!* saith Yahvé.

## 5.

Therefore *thus* will I do unto thee O Israel! because that I will do this unto thee, prepare thyself to meet thy God, Israel! || For here is he who formeth mountains and createth wind, and declareth to man what is his mind, | maketh sun-rise into darkness, and marcheth over the heights of the earth, | named Yahvé, the God of Hosts.

1. iii. 1-8. Inasmuch as the prophet is from Yuda, an oration

of this kind might easily be supposed to be directed to Yuda, although it is really directed to Israel. Accordingly the prophet, ver. 1, sq. puts in the observation that *all* the ancient tribes of Israel are to be understood; therefore very especially the Ten Tribes. For although a prophet from Yuda may be speaking here, yet no portion of the ancient nation may shut itself out from the truth of his words; for the justification of the prophet's appearance to speak and the duty of the people of both kingdoms to hear, lie precisely in the laws of that ancient glorious time, when the whole nation united itself into the community of Yahvé under the influence of the very truth which is concerned here, that the spirit must act most keenly in inquiry and correction just there where his nearer revelation has already created a higher stage of life. Comp. next to the Pentateuch, Jer. xxv. 29; Rom. ii. 9; 1 Pet. iv. 17.—And now follows at once the wonderful chain of proofs of the truth to be specially proved in this first strophe. That cause and effect correspond, may be concluded from facts from common life, as is shown vv. 3-5, with great calmness: If two walk together agreeably, the conclusion will not be objected to, that something has taken place between them, that they had made an arrangement to do so, and met accordingly; no lion will roar without already having his prey in his eye, and being about to spring upon the terrified animal; a bird will not fall upon the snare, *i.e.* be captured, without a cause, without a net that snares it round and holds it fast; just as, on the other hand, no one draws up the net without intending to take a bird. Or, to come nearer the human affairs that are here concerned, ver. 6, is an alarm given without its result, that the people run together in terror? Or, which is still more in point, do we not reason from a phenomenon, such as a great calamity befalling a town, to a cause, a hidden and yet certain cause, to Yahvé as the prime mover? Nay, to come to the real point at which all this is aimed, the prophet's deeds and words are not so accidental and isolated as is foolishly imagined. As the changes and



events of the spiritual world in their secret preparations and preformations come first and clearest into view in the prophet's mind; as therefore Yahvé does nothing without revealing to the prophet his secret with respect to it before its full execution in the eyes of the world, ver. 7;—so, on the other hand, the prophet, as soon as the divine intuition becomes quite firm and clear in his spirit, as soon as he has heard the overwhelming, terribly earnest voice of Yahvé, must necessarily proclaim the word of Yahvé just as he had heard it, ver. 8. He cannot do otherwise; he must speak, urged on by the resistless power of the divine spirit. Thus it was in the case of 'Amôs. Therefore instead of persecuting him, men ought, from his extraordinary mission and preaching to infer the truth, that really great dangers and great punishments threaten, the reasons for which are, indeed, by no means hard to see. For

2. iii. 9, sq., one may invite even foreigners (Jer. iv. 16) to see how in Samaria abominations are carried on quite publicly, especially by the magnates, who do nothing but heap up ill-gotten treasures in their houses (and therewith their own sins), as if they had forgotten how to act uprightly.—On this account the punishment cannot be doubtful; and it is forthwith described, vv. 11-15, by some of its most important signs. The enemy, the Assyrian, advances constantly nearer the centre of the country, the fortress Samaria, hemming in the land on his way, overthrowing Samaria's fortress (ver. 9), and plundering her palaces, built in such unrighteousness. When the conquest comes the magnates, at present so luxurious and idle, lying stretched upon costly divans, will then make such solitary escapes as happen when on the attack of a lion a shepherd can only find here and there a limb to rescue, ver. 12. Yes, certainly, on that great judgment-day, when the idol-altars at Bethel, as with head smitten off, must fall, as it were by a divine earthquake (comp. ix. 1), the numerous grand and luxurious houses of these unrighteous people will then also fall, vv. 13-15. Thus ver. 14 is simply the protasis, inasmuch as in this con-

nexion, iii. 9—iv. 3, no other subject is treated of than civil injustice and its consequences.

3. The wives of the magnates share this sin with their husbands. By their love of luxury and dissoluteness they encourage their husbands to oppress the weak. Therefore are these Bashan's cows, *i.e.* fat women, in Samaria, specially addressed at the end, iv. 1-3; comp. Isa. iii. 16—iv. 1; xxxii. 9-13. Their punishment, according with their sin, is, that at the conquest they will be drawn out of their beautiful houses by the rude conqueror in spite of their resistance, and taken prisoners, will be drawn out by force just like fish by means of fish-hooks (Jer. xvi. 16; Ez. xxix. 4). And then in that hour of need, as many of them as escape for a time, will flee out of the ruins of the walls of the once strong city, in great haste (each caring for herself only, Isa. xlvii. 15; Jos. vi. 20); and then although the first thing they take with them in their flight is their god, yet in their haste and terror they cast away this silver or wooden god upon the mountain (in Samaria, ver. 1) in order to save themselves alone, Isa. xlv. 20; ii. 18-21.

4. The language lowers its elevated tone, becoming calmer, and passing into scorn. To be sure you love your idols and idol-temples at Bethel and Gilgal too well to let them go without a struggle. Go on to visit them; run from one temple of that kind to another, that you may sin more and more, and present to the dead idols, with the most ridiculous zeal, all your various sacrifices, even the magnificent free-will offerings, to which the whole of the people were invited, and at which the more palatable leavened bread might be taken as an addition, Lev. vii. 12, sq. (although Mosaism is not very favourable to it). Continue to act thus, for it is evidently your determination!—Still, vv. 6-11, if one refers to the history of the last decades, it strikingly teaches that your fortunes have not been improved thereby but on the contrary deteriorated: calamities enough of the most various kinds have made themselves felt with increasing severity. And each of them ought to have warned

you and brought you back to the true Lord of Creation, since, if men turn from him, he *also on his part* possesses and sends means of chastisement; but you would not be warned or reformed thoroughly by any of them. The more blows, each time of a severer kind, the plainer the correction of the true God, the more has your hard impenitence increased! 'Amôs presents this reciprocal relation, on each side growing more determined, in five short strophes, choosing as examples some well-known calamities of the time. 1, Famine, ver. 6; 2, in connexion with that, a partial but severe drought, so that many died from thirst, ver. 7 f.; 3, diseases in the corn and locusts, ver. 9; 4, a plague, just like the Egyptian, such as is wont to spring from the putridity following a great defeat in war, ver. 10; and in general, 5, a multitude of other calamities, by which the whole surface of the country was destroyed almost as was Sodom (taken verbally from Gen. xix. 29), and the entire nation was like a scarcely rescued brand (repeated Isa. vii. 4; Zech. iii. 2). At the present day we are unable to follow historically the individual calamities to which 'Amôs refers. And what war is intended, ver. 10, in which the soldiers were severely beaten and the whole of the horsemen with their horses were taken prisoners, it is very difficult quite definitely to say: comp., however, *Hist. of Israel*, IV. p. 120, sq. (III. p. 598, sq.).

5. Hence, on account of these and all the other charges, which have been mentioned above, against which ye have no defence, must follow that *final* punishment, which was threatened above, and which is here quite briefly referred to in theatrical imitative language, as if the prophet himself here waved the correcting hand (*so! thus!* referring to what had before been said, as in Jer. v. 13). But since the end is coming, since Yahvé will himself appear with the final punishment, the judgment, it is fitting that the people stand up, and prepare themselves to receive him, as the accused rises at least when the judge approaches. For thou art not ignorant as to who this judge is, and wilt thou persist still to live in idleness, unprepared and unready? If so, then

I must say to thee, ver. 13: He who comes is no other than the only true God himself, who once created the mountains and is still ever creating the invisible wind; who makes himself felt not only in this external manner, but also—and that is what specially concerns us—and is immediately connected with the blowing of the invisible and unconfined wind—announces his mind and will within man's breast, within the prophet's (by which a telling reference is made here at the end to the opening words, iii. 7, sq. (comp. Zech. xii. 1; John iii. 8); and, who at times (when it must be so) advances to punish just as the bright sunrise suddenly grows dark (Isa. l. 3), and in the alarming tempest (Ps. xviii. 10, sq.); the God Yahvé, known to you long ago. There cannot be a more forcible conclusion than this.

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As to the meaning of עֶלְיָה iii. 5, see § 128*b*. We must understand here the large net of the bird-catcher which he has to draw up, and which takes a number of birds at once.

The words iii. 10 are very closely dependent on the verb *see ye* / ver. 9, acc. to § 351*b*. That ver. 9, sq. the Philistines and Egyptians are called together to witness the horrible doings and commotions in Samaria, is an invitation of that antique character which we find in David's lament, 2 Sam. i. 20; and there is the ancient belief that the Philistines and the Egyptians are always the nations that rejoice most over Israel's humiliation. How entirely different shall we find this when we come to Hoséa! That the LXX. read אַשּׁוּר *Assyria* by mistake for אַשְׁדּוֹד is clear.

Since קָבִיב *around* has always another construction, it is better to take קָבִיב iii. 11 as *environment, investing*, acc. § 153*a*; and this meaning best suits the context. It is true קָבִיב does not occur in 'Amôs elsewhere; but it is improbable that he would have construed it differently from the usual construc-

tion. Taken thus, both words *distress* and *environment* are dependent on דַּחֲרָץ, acc. § 339*b*.

The word דַּחֲרָץ, iii. 12, which the Massôra rightly distinguish by two distinctions from דַּחֲרָץ *Damascus*, from the evident sense and structure of members, must here and vi. 4 denote a kind of soft (comp. *damitha*, to be soft) fabric; and is therefore the Arab. *dimsak* = *dimaks* soft fabric, of linen or of silk (having no relation to the word *Damascus*); according to Imrialqais, *M.* v. 12, the word is ancient Arabic, and is explained in the *scholia* to Hamâsa, p. 265, l. 1., as *white silk*. Comp. on this early widely spread word, the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wissenschaft*, vi. p. 89, and the *Gött. Nachrichten*, 1862, p. 372. If the Germ. *Damast*, (Eng. *Damask*) is to be derived from *Damascus*, it must have been originally not the same word as that we have here.

In reference to the words iii. 14, sq., it is of essential importance to observe that according to the entire purport of this strophe, which deals exclusively with the social injustice and luxury of the men and the corresponding punishment, only what is said, ver. 15, as to the destruction of the splendid winter and summer houses, and other ivory-decorated buildings, belongs to the narrative and chief matter of the discourse. What is said, ver. 14, about the destruction of the splendid altars of Bethel is parenthetical only, a further definition of time. Still the hurried reference here to the idol-worship in Bethel as the deepest cause of all further corruption has great emphasis, and is expanded below, ix. 1-6: it is possible enough that something was said about it between iv. 3 and iv. 4, where the above mentioned hiatus occurs.

The expression אַחֲרֶיךָ iv. 2; ix. 1, is plainly peculiar to our prophet, having the meaning *your last, end*, i.e. all of you unto the last, without exception; it therefore denotes more than אַחֲרֶיךָ i. 8; ix. 12. A meaning like *your posterity* does not suit the context either here or ix. 1. At ix. 1 at least the LXX. have retained the more correct rendering.—Instead of the meaningless reading הַחֲמוֹנָה another ח must be inserted,

and **רִמְמוֹנָה** adopted, as the LXX. do. Rimmona is then a goddess associated with the masc. Rimmon, 2 Kings v. 18, a Syrian God, who might at that time be greatly honoured; a passage very similar would then be v. 26. Rimmona was probably the Syrian Goddess of love, at that time greatly in favour, so called from the pomegranate, from its old and well-known import in love affairs: this was probably her symbol. This fruit is often mentioned in Canticles in a more general sense. *Comp. Hist. of Israel*, II. 192, 332, 353; III. 126 (II. 272, 470, 499, III. 606). Other explanations of **הַרְמוֹנָה** are not successful.

In iv. 5 **וְנִזְטָר** would have to be explained acc. § 351c; but in this particular connexion of the sentences **וְנִזְטָר** is more suitable, and the LXX. have it, but did not understand it. Further, that the idolatries referred to iv. 4, sq. were quite modern, *e.g.* that of Rimmona, appears from the immense zeal with which they were solemnised, and which the prophet bitterly describes in all its ridiculousness. Excess of zeal in the presentation of tithes was the more natural, inasmuch as they were originally free gifts and might continue to be so regarded in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes; see *Alterthümer des v. Isr.* p. 397, sq. (344). On the free-will thanksgivings and the unleavened bread allowed with them, see *Alterthümer*, p. 45, sq., 71, sq. (37, sq., 58, sq.)

The tenses of the words ver. 7, sq. from **וְהַצְטָרְתִּי** onwards might lead one to imagine that the drought here described had often occurred in the course of several years: yet acc. to § 342b this form of the tenses may be used in the narration of past events merely to bring the past vividly before the mind; and this is the more suitable here inasmuch as in all the other five instances the narration refers to the simple past: only in this instance, where there was more to be individually described, is the scene brought more vividly before us. How many times instances of such plagues may have occurred, is nowhere indicated vv. 6-11; that they actually did occur is simply brought forward.

Further, iv. 10. Elsewhere  $\square\gamma$  *with* is at times found with the meaning *yet besides*, or as an emphatic *and*, § 352c; so that the sense is, in addition to your horses being taken captive, the divine sword, as the great sword of punishment, killed your young warriors in battle. Why the horses are specially mentioned is explained by me in my commentary on Ps. xx. and elsewhere often. Comp. Mic. v. 9.—In German one might say instead of *even into your nostrils*, acc. to § 352b, with the same meaning, *into your own nostrils* (*in eure eigne Nase*).

### 3. *The Lamentation*, ch. v.—vi.

There remains nothing, therefore, but unavoidable ruin, and thus early the prophet begins to sing his elegy over the fall, which in spirit he already beholds as consummated, of the kingdom about to be conquered by the Assyrians. Yet just as any mourning oration may take a further retrospect in the consideration of the painful case, and just as after the fall of a good man it recounts his various virtues to the fellow-mourners, so this lamentation, after a short introduction, v. 1-3, at once reviews the several perversities which had brought on this unavoidable fall, and with stern censure shows what ought to have been done and what the eternal divine law required. Inasmuch as the prophet thus obtains the third time the opportunity to rebuke, as in a panoramic review, the many and heinous sins of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, he refers also to Yuda, just as he had done at the opening of the first discourse, and finally intentionally classes both kingdoms together. And as at the commencement he connects with the elegy the necessary wail over the grievous sins which thus lead to death, he rebukes in the first strophe the idolatry; in the second, the perversion of justice; in the third, the thoughtlessness of those who imagine they justify themselves by the mere external worship of Yahvé, and accordingly will hear nothing of the prophetic threats; in the fourth, the luxurious security of the effeminate magnates; and as the first and third strophes

exhaust their conduct towards the divine, so the second and fourth that towards men; but both the latter ones close very significantly with images of bitter mourning, of corpses and of decay, returning thus to the fundamental thought, v. 16; vi. 9, sq. But if these are in detail the real causes of the overthrow, it appears again quite clearly at the close, that the overthrow is inevitable, that the Assyrians must annihilate the northern kingdom and that of Yuda also, which likewise has not kept itself pure, is on the road to great peril, the whole being thus more briefly summed up in the closing strophe, vi. 11-14. Thus this mourning oration also closes with the proof of the necessity of the sad fall, as if the inner proof of the matter were to be feared at no stage, not even at the last when the sentence had already passed; everything points to this proof.

5.

1.

1 Hear ye this word, what lamentation I take up over you, house of Israel! ||

Fallen is she riseth not again—the virgin Israel, | is put away upon her ground, no one raiseth her up! || For thus saith the Lord Yahvé: the city which goeth out with a thousand, will leave a hundred, | and that which goeth out with a hundred will leave ten—of the house of Israel.

For thus saith Yahvé to the house of Israel: |  
5 seek me—then ye live! || and seek not Bethel, and go not to Gilgal, and go not over to Beérshéba! | for Gilgal will weep gall, and Bethel [God's house] become sin's house. || Seek Yahvé that ye may live, | lest he break as fire into the house of Yoseph, and devour it without anyone to quench it for Bethel! || he who formeth the Seven Stars and



Orion, | and turneth darkness into morning, and darkeneth the day to night, | who calleth to the waters of the sea and poureth them over the face of the earth, named Yahvé; || who rayeth abroad devastation over what is firm, | so that desolation cometh over fortresses.

2.

- 10 O they who change judgment into wormwood, | and cast righteousness to the earth, || in the market hate the reprovcr, | and abhor him who speaketh innocently: ||—therefore because ye tread upon the bowed down and ye take a tribute of corn from him, houses of squared stone ye have built and shall not dwell therein, | pleasant vineyards ye have planted and shall not drink their wine! ||—For I know that many are your transgressions, and numerous your sins, | ye who oppress the righteous, take a ransom, and distress the helpless in the market. || Therefore the wise keepeth silence in such a time, | because it is an evil time. || Seek good and not evil, that ye may live! *Thus* will Yahvé God of Hosts be with you as ye give out; ||
- 15 hate evil and love good, and cause justice to stand in the market, | if peradventure Yahvé God of Hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Yoseph! — || Therefore thus saith Yahvé God of Hosts the Lord: in all markets death-wail, and in all streets they will say alas! alas! | and the husbandman calleth to mourning and death-wail to the artists of lamentation; || and in all vine-gardens death-

wail, | when I pass through thy midst! saith Yahvé.

## 3.

O ye who long for the day of Yahvé! | for what end for you shall the day of Yahvé be? it is darkness and not light! || it is as if one fleeth before the lion and there meeteth him the bear, | and cometh home leaneth his hand on the wall and  
 20 there biteth him the serpent! || Yes darkness is the day of Yahvé and not light, | and blackness and hath no ray! || I hate, despise your feasts | and I will not smell your solemn days! || yes if ye bring me burnt-offerings, I even delight not in meat-offerings, | and will not regard the thanks of your fat calves. || Remove from me the noise of thy songs, | and the sound of thy harps let me not hear; || and let justice flow as waters, | and righte-  
 25 ousness as a perennial brook! || Flesh-offerings and gifts did ye bring to me in the wilderness forty years long, house of Israel? || —Thus will ye then remove the post of your king, and the pillar of your images, | the star of your God which ye made for you, || and beyond Damascus will I lead you captive! saith Yahvé named God of Hosts.

## 6.

## 4.

1 O ye at ease in Ssion, and ye careless ones on the mount of Samaria, | distinguished ones of the first of the nations, and to whom cometh the house of Israel, || (pass yonder to Khalne and see, and go from there to the great Chamâth, and descend from

there to Gath of the Philistines; | are they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than yours? ||) ye who call to the evil day, be far! | and pull near the seat of injustice; || who lie upon ivory-beds, and stretch themselves upon their wanton couches, | and eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the full feeding; || who bungle upon the sounds of the harp, | imagine they understand artistic music like Davîd; || who drink wine from bumpers, and anoint themselves with the best oils | —yet they do not grieve over Yoseph's hurt! || Therefore they will now go captive at the head of the captives, | so that the shrieking of the wanton ceaseth. || Sworn hath the Lord Yahvé by his soul, saith Yahvé the God of Hosts: | I abhor Yakob's pride and hate his palaces! | and deliver up thus the city with its fulness; || and if there remain ten people in one house, they will die, || if  
 10 his uncle and his burier lifteth one up, to bring the bones out of the house, | and saith to him in the innermost house: "is there still some one with thee?" and if he saith: "no one!" | then answereth the former: "Hush! for Yahvé's name is not to be mentioned!"

## 5.

Yes behold Yahvé commandeth, and smiteth the large house into ruins, | and the small house into clefts. || Do horses run upon the rock? or doth one plow it with oxen, | that ye turn justice into poison, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood? || ye who rejoice in a thing of nought, | ye who say

“did we not by our strength take to us horns?” ||  
 Yes behold I raise up against you house of Israel,  
 saith Yahvé God of Hosts, a nation | which will  
 press upon you from the direction of Chamâth unto  
 the river of the steppe!

1. v. 1-3. The elegy is substantially confined to ver. 2, where also the whole complexion of the language is purely poetical, *e.g.* the figure of the city (πόλις, our *state*) as of a youthful, vigorous, unviolated virgin, which is not elsewhere so familiar to the prophet. But because this is in reality but an anticipatory lamentation over a kingdom which as a fact has not yet fallen, although in the mind of the prophet it is as good as fallen, in ver. 3, an explanation in the language of ordinary discourse is immediately added, namely, the divine certainty that the conflict with the Assyrians will be most calamitous, and that every city, whether large or small, will have the most painful experience of this. It is then immediately, vv. 4-6, 8, sq. shown that death must come by such things as Israel loves, since according to ancient revelation life is to be gained only through Yahvé; if therefore the inhabitants of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes wish on the contrary to seek the temples of idols in their own land at Bethel and Gilgal, or even, passing beyond their own borders into Yuda, at Beérshéba', they will there not only find their hope in these false gods deceived, since their sanctuaries will themselves be very soon destroyed by the Assyrians, but will see the true God advance as in unquenchable, devouring fire against them and their temples,—*him* who not only created and sustains the wonders of heaven, but also upon earth creates the marvellous and yet regular eternal changes of light and darkness, often suddenly makes himself felt, laying waste the land like the overwhelming sea (ix. 5, 6), and possesses similarly a thousand resources of correction, who also sends down unexpectedly destruction upon the strongest fortresses (*e. g.*

Samaria, iii. 11). Thus everything coheres beautifully together, and the end of the strophe is grand and exalted; and ver. 9 not only corresponds well with the preceding ver. 7, to which this entire description of the marvellous power of the true God is attached, but also with the end of the third strophe ver. 27. On the other hand, clearly ver. 7 does not belong here, and finds its true place before ver. 10. Then ver. 8, sq. becomes accordingly merely a further description of the subject of the second member of ver. 6; and in the present state of the text at all events this is the simplest supposition.

2. The second strophe passes rapidly from the description of the unrighteousness, and of the hatred of the public rebuke of it which 'Amôs had himself experienced, vv. 7, 10, to the corresponding punishment ver. 11: they who oppress the unprotected and threaten them with death merely with a view to extort from them a new tribute, a new ransom (ver. 11 and ver. 12, comp. Job vi. 21, sq.), that they may thus further increase their already too great abundance of worldly treasures, they (led captive by the Assyrians) shall have laid all in vain the foundations of their luxurious life! Yet since the end had been thus almost precipitately referred to, there is a prefatory return vv. 12-15, to a previous calm consideration and establishment of the threat: Alas, only too numerous are their transgressions, their persecutions of the good ver. 12; wherefore also the voice of the sage so easily becomes silent in such a time ver. 13, although in the case of many a one, *e.g.* the prophet, it is only after brute force has been used; whereby, however, no improvement is effected, but the misery is only made still greater. Quite otherwise ought they to act who are still professing that they have not forsaken the ancient God of the nation (which is carried out at greater length vv. 21-25), in order that after the chastisement there may be saved if not the whole nation yet at least a *remnant* of it! ver. 14, sq. An anticipation quite of the nature of those of Yesaya.—But inasmuch as this great chastisement is the very thing which at present is indispensable, the previous

threat is again taken up ver. 16, sq. to conclude the strophe : Passing through the land (Ex. xii. 12) Yahvé will bring a pestilence like those of Egypt, so that on account of the exceedingly large number of corpses both townspeople and peasants and vine-dressers become mourners, and the funereal music of itself is already heard coming to meet the musically instructed official mourners who have become superfluous.

3. v. 18-27. In spite of the rampant idolatry of the northern kingdom, there might still be many there who professed to worship very zealously the ancient national deity by means of feasts and sacrifices, and who, precisely because they imagined that they had thereby done more than enough, mocked at the threatenings of the prophets of this God, especially at the delay of the great day of judgment which had been so often threatened (comp. p. 52). Such thoughtless persons know not what they say and do : if mockingly they wish for the day of Yahvé, the day the nature of which has been already sufficiently described, they cannot possibly consider how terrible it must be should it come now, inevitably reaching every sinner ! vv. 18-20. But if in their unhallowed mockery they appeal to their own ceremonial righteousness in the worship of Yahvé, it must be said to them, that on the contrary Yahvé despises all their works of that kind, ver. 21, sq. ; would that instead of this sanctimonious noise of singing and playing they would do the one thing needful, practise righteousness, making its stream and blessing to flow perennially in the land ! ver. 23, sq. Why, the same Israelites once for forty years brought no animal sacrifices to Yahvé ! (for in the barren, poverty-stricken wilderness they were quite unable to bring them ; at all events individuals had not the power to do it, if perhaps in the name of the community a meagre animal sacrifice was prescribed at times, which in comparison with the present rich offerings even of private people could not even have the name of one, comp. Hos. ii. 5-16 ; Jer. vii. 22, sq.), and yet that was the golden age of Israel, and so well-pleasing to Yahvé ;

how little therefore depends upon such sacrifices!—Therefore, ver. 26, sq., if they are such foolish traitors to the higher religion, as the due punishment, suddenly alarmed and driven to flight by their enemies, they will be obliged to take the miserable idols of all kinds upon their backs, if peradventure they whom their own hands have made may help them! (comp. iv. 3; Isa. ii. 18-21; xlv. 20; xlv. 1: Virg. Aen. vi. 68)—and yet be led far away into exile in the north by the true God whom they despise without any help from their false gods!

4. vi. 1-10. The magnates in Ssion and Samaria are indeed the princes and directors of Israel (this most distinguished, eminent people) to whom the nation seeks when it requires counsel and help (Ps. cxxii. 4); and lest this great name, which arose in the time of Davîd, of the *first* and most important nation should be so misinterpreted as if 'Amôs had said more than was true in his time, he appeals, ver. 2, incidentally to the surrounding nations far and wide, who nevertheless are not more powerful or more favoured than the two Israelitish kingdoms (an assertion which was then certainly correct, since Assyria and Egypt do not come into this account, the first being at that time too distant, the second an incomparable land; the words of the petition, vii. 2, 5, form no real contradiction). As princes of so eminent a nation they ought, therefore, to watch with the greater zeal and care that these people may remain upon the same exalted grade: but without sharing at all the pain of the hurt of Yoseph, the transgressions of the nation, they take life carelessly as it comes, ver. 1, ignore the evil day of punishment, when the prophets threaten it (comp. v. 18-20; ix. 10), insomuch that instead of it they bring nearer the throne of injustice, ver. 3, and wish to display their strength only in wanton pastimes, in the pleasures of sumptuous meals, at best in a pitiable dilettanteism, in a bungling imitation of Davidic music.—Accordingly this degenerated life shall be thereby broken up, that the leaders of the nation, ver. 1, shall be the first to go into captivity, ver. 7; but at home, vv. 8-10,

the issue of this pride is, that not only the enemy advances with devastation into the city, but in the retinue of war there comes pestilence, and if (a rare case!) ten people still remain in a house, yet they all die; and, that if a distant relative comes into a pesthouse of this kind in order to show the last honours to the one who died most recently, or rather only to put out of the way his corpse, and in doing this enquires of a sick man hidden in the farthest corner of the house, whether there is any one beside him in the house, but he denying it will break out into loud weeping and lamentation;—that then this visitor at once admonishes him to be silent, lest in a time when Yahvé has at length been made exceedingly angry, calling upon his name and lamentation should incense him still more. A thrilling picture of extremest suffering in the midst of general stupefaction and despair!

5. But from this picture of death is an easy transition to the commencement again, vi. 11-14. Yes, the fall of both kingdoms (houses *tabernacles*, comp. ix. 8-11), which are here for the first time intentionally and plainly classed together, is before God certain: as it were a single blow or earthquake from him will shake and bring them both into ruins, ver. 11, comp. ix. 1. And is anything else possible? (once more to declare the true cause!) can everything be upset and made preposterous with impunity, do horses run up the rock, and can this steep, hard rock be plowed? that ye imagine ye can upset and reverse everything in the kingdom! Ye senseless people who pride yourselves in your infatuated imaginations upon your own power—yet that of which ye now boast will soon show itself as that which it is, a nonentity, a delusion!—For once more and most distinctly to say it, ver. 14, soon a nation from the north, raised up by Yahvé (the Assyrians) will drive first the citizens of the northern kingdom, the most senseless of all, from the extreme boundary of their land in the north down to the Steppe-river, *i.e.* to the most south-eastern boundary (where this river falls into the Dead Sea, Isa. xv. 7),



thus overrunning the whole kingdom as it was then bounded (2 Kings xiv. 25). And thus at the final conclusion, as ix. 8, sq., the reference is again limited to the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, which is what the plan and meaning of the whole book demand.

On רשע v. 1, see § 334 a.

5. 2. It should not be overlooked that even when Israel or Yuda is called *virgin* or (which may as easily be the case, Isa. xxxvii. 31 ; Lam. i. 15 ; comp. iv. 21, sq. ; Jer. xlvi. 11, 19, 24), *daughter*, the figure with the idea is borrowed purely from the city, and in this case from the chief city of the kingdom : this phrase not occurring anywhere before the period after Davîd, or indeed before the division of the kingdom. For after the nation had so divided itself that it found its two strongest resting and gathering places only in the two cities, Jerusalem and Samaria, it became with respect to its constitution and government similar in every essential regard to the Phœnicians and Greeks which increasingly tended to split up into fractions. A community which proceeds essentially from one city only, (and the Phœnicians, Greeks, Romans, knew no other, and the *Politeia*, i.e. city, community with its corresponding *Politics* which proceeded from them, therefore became so exceedingly one-sided), may develope itself under favourable conditions very independently, powerfully and prosperously in its original narrow and confined limits, but from the first carries with it a certain narrowness of view and of aim, which may ultimately lead to the most hurtful results. This one city easily becomes insolent both towards its own territory and other independent cities, finds it difficult to master jealousy, and becomes indeed possibly a firm stay for many higher efforts, yet in its overthrow drags down with it all that depends upon it ; and that brighter as well as this darker side may be very clearly followed in the history of Jerusalem as a city of this kind. What a wholly different history had Israel when it was still one great undivided nation, and had not yet learnt to

pursue a *Policy* and Politics in the Greek and Roman sense ! It is well to follow more closely this entire national history from this point of view also ; and precisely the words of the prophets from the time of 'Amôs, supply many opportunities for this. In this prophet the phrase occurs but once, and in this purely poetical passage ; in Yesaya, on the other hand, the *daughter Ssion* has become already a standing expression ; and insomuch as the ideas *city* and *nation* grew more and more interchangeable, Yesaya already speaks of the *daughter of my people*, in which Yéremyá and others followed him.

The words, v. 3, are an allusion to the levies and the census, which existed in Israel from ancient times, comp. *Hist. of Israel*, II. 274, sq. ; III. 144, sq. (II. 388, sq. III. 195, sq. ; *Alterth.* p. 403, sq. (350, sq.) On the לָּ in לְבִית, § 292 a.

The paranomasia with *Gilgal*, ver. 5, runs in the Hebrew : Gilgal—captive it will be led away ! In the case of *Bethel* there is merely a play upon the thought, comp. *supra*, p. 69.

Instead of the first שָׂדֶה ver. 9, the LXX. have the more suitable reading שָׂדֶה comp. i. 5 ; which has not the meaning here which it has vi. 6, where men are spoken of. This entire ver. 9 stands here *after* the phrase *called Yahvé*, v. 8, with which the conclusion is made, iv. 13 ; ix. 6, in order to come back with the greater force to the thought of v. 6.—If the words ver. 7 or ver. 9 commence the following strophe, one might suppose that הָיִי should preface them as v. 18 ; vi. 1. In any case its force is there.

On בּוֹשֵׁשׁ, v. 11, comp. § 49 d. If it were another orthography of בּוֹשֵׁשׁ, it would then mean like הִבִּישׁ, *to act ill towards any one* ; but בּוֹשֵׁשׁ has on the contrary quite another meaning, whilst the intensification of בּוֹשֵׁשׁ *to tread*, accords well with עַל *upon*, and, inasmuch as judicial oppressions are spoken of, corresponds well with הִטָּה v. 12. The Syriac *bēsô*, *to despise*, is derived from it.

In ver. 16, sq. manifestly there are distinguished as the three great divisions of the nation : (1) townspeople ; (2) husband-

men ; (3) vine-dressers ; and it is noteworthy with what definiteness the last two occupations are separated, as a sign of the high stage of development to which both agriculture and the culture of the vine had then been brought respectively. But if this is so, the words **יִקְרְאוּ אֶפְרַיִם** must be construed acc. § 317 *b*.—The words ver. 17 *b*. have manifestly allusion to a very old conception of the Passover, comp. *supra* on ii. 13. In ver. 22 it should not be overlooked that **מִנְחֹת** are much more important sacrifices than **עֹלֹת** ; by which fact the force of the **וְ** before the first is determined, comp. iv. 10, comp. § 352 *b*.—The thought of the beautiful words ver. 24 is quite like Isa. xi. 9, even thus early ; and if men by their own efforts alone can produce this happy state, they can and must bend all their energies upon making its coming possible. Nothing else is conveyed by these words ; but what they do convey is true. It should also be observed how the prophet's language rises with the elevation of the thought and exhortation : for suddenly in ver. 23, sq. alone occurs the austere *thou*, as if Moses himself were speaking ; whilst, ver. 25, when the language begins again to resume its usual course, because only an additional reason for the condemnation is subjoined, the usual *ye* recurs.

On ver. 26, sq. **סִבּוֹת** is explained by the corresponding Syriac *sekkûthô*, *sekkûto*, (in form also the same word) as a post or pale (lit. what is run in, impressed, accordingly a stamp, a coin, *sikkah*), the wood upon which the symbol of the idol (their king and God, Isa. viii. 21), *e.g.* a star was fixed ; **כִּיּוֹן** formed acc. § 156 *b*, is then as being = **מְכוֹנָה** the base, stand, very accordant ; and we may suppose that the God Rimmon, iv. 3, or rather Astarte, had a star as symbol (comp. *Hist. of Israel*, IV. 40 [III. 492]). The material, rude, self-made character of these gods is here especially brought forward ; in this way alone do the members correctly correspond, and that ver. 26 belongs to ver. 27 may be concluded from the fact that otherwise the four words of ver. 27 would be much too short and bare after vv. 18-26. Since **כִּיּוֹן**, which occurs only here, might be voca-

lised כִּי, and this in Syriac and Arabic denotes Saturn, many have desired to retain it here, not considering that thus the symmetry of the members would be wholly destroyed; for to read כְּפֹרֶה and to understand thereby a god, according to 2 Kings xvii. 30, appears too untenable. The LXX. had already understood the verse to refer to the past (comp. the criticism of Vatke's book in the *Berliner Jahrb.* 1836), and read כְּפֹרֶה, τὴν σκηνὴν τοῦ Μολοχ, as if a sacred tabernacle of Moloch were spoken of, suppositions too clearly contradicted by the context and verse-membership. The LXX., who have the words in another order, read perhaps כִּי instead of כְּפֹרֶה, and found here the god 'Παιφάν, comp. Lepsius' *Aegypt. Chronologie*, p. 93.—I have no desire further to refute the numerous and serious errors which many still put into the words of ver. 26, sq.; comp. *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* II. p. 60. As against these errors it is above all things important to bear in mind that the *me* of ver. 25 from its position in the Hebrew cannot form any antithesis to ver. 26.

As the mention of the three foreign kingdoms, vi. 2, is historically of great importance, it is equally clear that the order of their mention is not accidental. The first is *Kalne* lying in the far East, which must then have been still a separate kingdom (see *Hist. of Israel*, IV. 150 [III. p. 638, sq.]). The commencement is made with the East; but there is then a suitable bound to the north-west, to the *great Hamâth*: and what this means is discussed (*Hist. of Israel*, IV. p. 124 [III. p. 604]); then there is a *descent* in a south-westerly direction to Gath of the Philistines, with respect to the peculiar relations of which at that time see *ibid.* IV. 137 [III. 621, sq.]. If it is asked why 'Amôs makes mention of these three kingdoms only, inasmuch as, acc. ch. i., he might have mentioned a number of others, we can only suppose that these three only had at that time been very much spoken of in the most recent history, a fact known to us in the case of Gath.

On vi. 3. How easily a verb, which generally requires an

accusative object like נִדָּה, may be construed with לְ, appear from the similar cases, § 282 c. The word נִשְׁבָּת in b, derived from יָשַׁב in the sense of *to sit upon a throne*, which this verb often bears in poetry, must here answer to what the Vulgate expresses by *solium*; and the context in which a figurative phraseology predominates requires us to understand that a ruler's seat brought near is really intended.

On vi. 5. פָּרַט, like Arab. *furata*, conveys the idea of something precipitate, premature, which with reference to the performance of music can be nothing else than (*stümpfern*), *to bungle*; comp. *Alterth.* p. 289, note (250). The second member runs literally: *they believe that the instruments, e.g. harps, are for them as for David, i.e. therefore, that they can handle or play them just like David*; this sense of the words is clear and certain. We have here important evidence of how much a little musical skill belonged at so early a period to the ordinary life of the higher classes, a piece of dilettanteism which never deserves praise when it is mere appearance; comp. viii. 3, 10.

The *delivering up*, vi. 8, just as in the lyric, Deut. xxxii. 30, means simply to cause to come into the hands of the enemy: yet it is a poetically brief phrase. If הִסְפִּיר was intended here in the sense of סָבִיב, iii. 11, to denote a mere *shutting up*, we should expect in the following ver. 9, sq. a description of the conquest and sacking as in iii. 11: but if the word only expresses that God will not defend the populous city (of Samaria or Jerusalem) against the enemies in the approaching war, and in so far deliver them up as a master his slave whom he will not defend, ver. 9, sq. may in that case fitly describe how the pestilence will follow upon the unhappy war.

On vi. 12. J. D. Michaelis, in the *Orient. und Exeget. Bibl.* XIX. p. 202, made the emendation יִפְקֹר יָם, *does one plow the sea with oxen?* as the Latin poets use the proverb at least of *arenam* or *litora* (not *mare*) *arare*. This reading would apparently present the advantage of the avoidance of the plural form of פָּקַד which occurs elsewhere in no earlier books than

2 Chron. iv. 3 ; Neh. x. 37. But בְּקָרִים acc. § 176 *b* is essentially a form like סִימִים ; and 'Amôs introduces into the literary language much beside this which became current only at a later period. Another passage by means of which it might be seen how he uses the word בְּקָר does not occur in his book. If in this respect there is no objection to the reading, it must be granted that in respect of the context it is quite permissible, if the word סִלַּע receives its object from the preceding יַחְרוּשׁ ; and in the case of a shepherd like 'Amôs the phrase would in any case be simpler if it is taken to refer to the rock. Horses can neither be made to run up the rock, nor the bare rocks be plowed with oxen : this twofold thought is quite suitable here, and is most natural to the language of a man like 'Amôs, who understands husbandry, and gladly avails himself of its imagery. *Rock*, i.e. unproductive land, is here so expressive that several images may arise from it ; in fact, it may be said that even that Latin proverb approaches nearer to this phrase than such an exaggerated one as *to plow the sea*.

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## II. THE HISTORY AND THE VISIONS, CH. VII. 1—IX. 6.

### 1. *The first three Visions*, ch. vii. 1-9.

When 'Amôs appeared at Bethel, he began to declare in visions his presagings as to the fate of the northern kingdom. For just as visions are the first things that occur to the true prophet, so also a brief, telling, and yet problematic utterance of them most quickly excites the attention of the hearers. Accordingly 'Amôs appeared with the description of visions, which with growing clearness revealed the whole foundation of the truth, and issued with increasing definiteness in the presentation of the naked fact.

The three visions which are here narrated point out in gradual progression the overthrow of the kingdom, which

becomes more and more inevitable and imminent; and without doubt this gradual progression is well founded both in the outward fact itself as well as in the seer's mind. The complete inevitable overthrow will come after many and various preparations and commencements, after distant threatenings and partial corrections, as soon as all these have been given in vain; as was already shown above, iv. 6-13, in another form. Accordingly in the seer's mind also there arise involuntarily various terrible forebodings of the manner of the correction, various images and visions, he sees Yahvé bringing now this and then that punishment. But the true prophet has no pleasure in such dark forebodings, in the pictures of punishment: therefore, as they press upon him, he struggles against them with all his power, and urges upon Yahvé not actually to fulfil the threat (as without doubt many an evil is averted, many a deliverance obtained, by the exertions of the prophets). But, alas, the nation pays little steady heed to the exhortations of the truth, does not reform itself lastingly; accordingly there is ever breaking forth a new and still gloomier foreboding, a heavier threat and punishment, and it becomes constantly more difficult to hold this back. The first time locusts are threatened and the prophet already sees in the spirit the desolation they cause, yet his intercession serves to avert their actual coming, vv. 1-3; the second time (the nation, as is understood, not having reformed nevertheless), he beholds a more dreadful vision of a drought, burning up everything, as the divine judgment, but that also is averted by his intercession, his holy wrestling, vv. 4-6; but the third time he sees Yahvé himself, and in a wholly new and unusual attitude and occupation, discovers that he is coming to measure the city already destined for destruction (just as the spoiler draws his line over the part to be destroyed, applies his plumbline, that neither more nor less may be laid in ruins, Isa. xxxiv. 17; Lam. ii. 8), but this time finds no place for intercession, and in unrestrained procession the whole dark foreboding of evil bursts forth! vv. 7-9.

7.

1.

1 Thus the Lord Yahvé caused me to see, and behold he formed locusts in the beginning of the growth of the late-grass, | and behold there was after-grass after the king's hay, || and when they wholly ate up the herbage of the earth, then said I "O Lord Yahvé forgive now! | how will Yaqob stand? since he is so small."||—Yahvé repented at this ; | "it shall not come to pass" said Yahvé.

2.

Thus the Lord Yahvé caused me to see, and behold one called with the fire the Lord Yahvé will punish : | which devoured the great deep, and  
5 devoureth the field.|| Then said I "O Lord Yahvé cease now! | how will Yaqob stand? since he is so small."|| Yahvé repented at this ; | "this also shall not come to pass" said the Lord Yahvé.

3.

Thus he caused me to see, and behold the Lord stood upon a plumb city-wall, holding a plumb-line, || and Yahvé said to me "What seest thou, 'Amôs?" I said, "a plumb-line!" | Then said the Lord, "behold I place a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel ; | I will not again forgive him any more! || and Isaak's heights become desolate, and Israel's sanctuaries waste, | and I rise with the sword against Yarob'am's house."

1. vii. 1-3. On the one hand is seen the origin and arrival of the locusts, on the other a field of grass soon quite covered with them ; the time is deferred until the latter end of the year,



because if the locusts devour everything then nothing more is to be looked for during the year, *i.e.* for the next winter : which distressing situation is heightened by the fact that, as appears from this passage, in the northern kingdom the hay, as a kind of first-fruits which the kings had appropriated to themselves, did not belong to individuals (comp. *Hist. of Israel*, III. p. 295 (III. p. 403) ).

2. vii. 4-6. *One called—to contend*, to punish, a voice made known his intention that he would punish them *with the fire*. This figure was suggested by the dangerous grass and forest fires which so often occur in those districts in the blazing summer heat, Exod. xxii. 5 ; Joel i. 19, sq. : but where the imagination may play freely, as in this case, the fire grows into one consuming the whole world, as it were, drying up the sea (bordering on the Holy Land, Isa. xx. 6) and scorching up the fields.

3. vii. 7-9. The announcement is made, the whole is explained with greater slowness and solemnity, because the scene is quite new, at first sight the picture is surprising, while yet the fact itself is the most important. A city well constructed by a *plumb-line*, high, but also as if made to be measured.

כִּי ver. 2, acc. § 355 *b*, because in such cases the intention is primarily to describe a *picture*, a situation which is presented to the sight, although this form of the tenses is not generally long continued ; in the same way, however, וְאֵלֶיךָ occurs again ver. 4.

In ver. 4 the first thing to remember is that לָרִיב must be understood acc. § 338 *a*. Accordingly we must suppose, since *the Lord Yahvé* is subsequently repeated, that לָרִיב does not refer to him but to some indefinite person, such as an angel, who cries, *the Lord Yahvé will contend by fire*. Comp. *infra* on Isa. vi. 4. It is true this does not appear simple enough for 'Amôs : still, the expression, ver. 4, departs intentionally from that in other respects similar of vv. 1 and 7. A divine voice

calls to the proper quarter, that God wishes to punish by fire : and immediately the fire is there. In fact, such an angel appears again ix. 1.

2. *The Interruption. The Fourth Vision,*  
ch. vii. 10—viii. 3.

'Amôs has soon to yield before the calumnies and persecutions of Amassya, the idolatrous priest ; and, not to meet force by force, he voluntarily leaves the country when he was forbidden to stay : but he does not depart incurageously, or with changed feelings, this new act of violence having, on the contrary, immediately confirmed again the truth of his discourses and forebodings. It is an easy thing for him to refute the calumnies which had been raised against him from the basest prepossessions, vii. 14, sq. ; but because the restraining of the prophetic spirit, which is as unlawful as it is wicked, is least of all able to compass its design of restraining the course of the divine righteousness and judgment, the threat, hitherto bearing a general character, is now directed especially against Amassya, who must before all others first fall under it, vii. 16, sq. ; in fact, at last the entire former foreboding returns again in unrestrained course and a fourth vision follows the third, further to confirm it, under new imagery but in other respects exactly like the preceding : there is presented to the eye of the seer ripe plucked fruit, similarly Israel is ripe to be plucked as it were by Yahvé's hand, viii. 1-3, comp. Joel iv. 13. Thus 'Amôs departs without departing from himself.

10      Then Amassya the priest of Bethel sent to Yarob'am king of Israel saying : " 'Amôs conspireth against thee in the midst of the House of Israel, | the earth is not able to receive all his words ! || for thus spake 'Amôs : by the sword Yarob'am will fall, | and Israel go away captive from his land ! " ||

And Amassya said unto 'Amôš: "Seer, away flee thee into the land of Yuda, | and eat there bread, and there thou mayst prophesy! || but at Bethel thou shalt not prophesy any more, | because it is a royal sanctuary, and it is a seat of the kingdom." || —Then 'Amôš answered and said to Amassya: No prophet am I, neither am I a prophet's son, | but I  
 15 am a herdsman and a grower of sycamores; || then Yahvé took me from behind the herd | and Yahvé said to me: away speak as prophet to my people Israel! ||—And now hear Yahvé's word: | thou sayest "thou shalt not prophesy concerning Israel, and thou shalt not pour thyself concerning Isaak's house!" || therefore thus saith Yahvé: thy wife will commit whoredom in the city, thy sons and daughters fall by the sword, and thy land be divided by lot, | thou thyself die upon polluted ground, and Israel go away captive captive from his land! ||

8. 4.

1 Thus Yahvé caused me to see, | and behold a basket of ripe fruit, || and said "what seest thou 'Amôš?" I said "a basket of ripe fruit!" | Then said Yahvé unto me, "the *ripeness* is come to my people Israel; I will not any more forgive him!" || And the songs of the palace wail on that day, saith the Lord Yahvé; | plenty of corpses, everywhere cast forth in silence! ||

From the words of the chief priest ver. 10, sq., it appears that what we have written vv. 1-9, is only a brief epitome of all the prophet's publicly spoken words, but it is equally clear that

this priest has perverted everything to put the king into a state of alarm. We must suppose at ver. 12, sq. that the permission to expel the prophet came from the king who was probably at Bethel at the time. But what a base conception he forms of these higher things! Whoever is himself unacquainted in his own soul with truth and conceives of everything with reference to bread and pleasure, will also presuppose only what is base in his judgments of the best men, and baseless reasons may be easily found for glossing over the command of violence. But how greatly had this presupposition of baseness in 'Amôs missed the mark, ver. 14, sq., who (although at that time many prophets sought merely their livelihood by their prophetic vocation) differed from the ordinary prophets who devoted their whole life to their office, and had not even come out of a prophets' school, who had given up his easier mode of life purely in obedience to the sudden impulse of the spirit at a great moment of decision!—ver. 17, applies the general threat to this man in particular; when a rich man was led into exile and his establishment broken up, his wife, left behind in an unprotected condition, only too easily falls into immorality, in order to indulge in the luxurious life to which she had been accustomed, comp. *e.g.* Herod. i. 196, *ad fin.* and the reports of modern travellers as to the Armenian women in Ispahan when it was sacked.

viii. 3. The joyous songs of the palaces are changed into lamentations, Job xxx. 31; *b* brings the imagery with which two strophes of the first main section closed, v. 16; vi. 9, once more before the view briefly.

viii. 2. *The ripeness* to preserve the paronomasia in קִיץ and עֵץ instead of *the end*.

viii. 3. הַשְּׁלִיךְ comp. § 294 *b* and 332 *b*.

3. *The Further Discourse thereupon. The Fifth Vision,*  
ch. viii. 4—ix. 6.

With these words 'Amôš left therefore that land ; the series of those visions at Bethel is also complete, the last two answering to each other exactly like the first two, and the four together comprising in a progressive series the whole thought. —But reflecting in his present abode upon those visions which he had announced at Bethel, he adds a few more words by way of explanation, especially of the last two visions which were occupied purely with the threat of destruction. Hear ye, thus falls the admonition alone upon the citizens of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes who delight in oppression, viii. 4-8, hear ye, the meaning of such visions, ye who pervert everything from pure covetousness : must not the whole earth tremble as if smitten by the divine wrath on account of these and similar abominations ? Accordingly on the day of punishment everything will be perverted and turned upside down in your experience, whatever ye love, light, joy and luxury, into its mournful antithesis, and, on the other hand, whatever ye in your folly now despise, the word of Yahvé, which alone is able to revive and reform, will then be sought after in vain ! viii. 9-14.

Yet it is as if the prophet himself felt that after all his further admonitions of this kind would prove useless so far as the kingdom of the Ten Tribes was concerned : a new and more definite vision of its necessary and final overthrow surprises him. Unavoidable, that is the final result, is the overthrow of this kingdom and the punishment connected therewith, which will inevitably overtake every sinner : and in a new vision of an entirely different character, which however as the fifth really closes the series, it becomes evident in a most striking manner at the close of the two earlier portions of the book, that the blow which will fall upon the idol-altar will also

of necessity reach the whole community which surrounds it, ix. 1-6.

The whole falls into three strophes of increasing length : but the third is the fifth vision which is intended to conclude this portion of the book.

Hear this ye who pant for the helpless, | and to  
 5 destroy the sufferers of the earth, || saying “when  
 is the new moon past that we may sell grain, and  
 the Sabbath that we may open corn ? | in order  
 that we may make the bushel small, the money  
 large, and pervert the deceitful balances, || that we  
 may buy the wretched for silver, the helpless for a  
 pair of shoes, | and sell the droppings of the corn !” ||  
 —Yahvé hath sworn by the pride of Yaqob : | “I  
 will never forget all their deeds !” || On account of  
 this shall not the earth tremble, and every one  
 dwelling upon it wither, | so that it wholly swelleth  
 up like the Nile, and driveth itself up and sinketh  
 like the Nile of Egypt ? ||

Accordingly on that day I cause, saith the Lord  
 Yahvé, the sun to set at noon, | and I send darkness  
 10 to the earth in clear daylight ; || and turn your  
 feasts into mourning, and all your songs into  
 lamentation, | bring sackcloth upon all your loins,  
 and baldness upon every head, | and make her  
 [Samaria] as at the lamentation for an only one,  
 and her end as the bitter day. || —Behold days  
 come, saith the Lord Yahvé, when I throw a famine  
 into the land, | not a famine for bread and not a  
 thirst for water, but to hear Yahvé's words ; || then  
 people wander from sea to sea, and from north to

east, | they will run to seek Yahvé's word and not find it ! || On that day the fair virgins and youths will faint from thirst, || they who swear by Samaria's sin and say "by thy God, O Dan, and by the way to Beérshéba' !" | they will fall and not rise any more ! ||

9.

5.

1 I saw the Lord standing above the altar, and he said : smite the knop so that the groundsels shake, and cast it in pieces upon all their heads : | the last of them will I kill by the sword, | there shall not flee of them a flier, and there shall not rescue himself of them a runaway ; || if they broke into hell, from there my hand shall take them, | and if they climbed to heaven, from there will I cast them down ; || and if they hid themselves in Karmel's head, from there will I search and take them, | and if they concealed themselves from my eyes in the bottom of the sea, from there will I order the serpent to bite them ; || and if they go away captive before their enemies, from there will I order the sword to kill them, | and set my eye upon them  
5 for evil, not for good ! || by the Lord Yahvé of Hosts, who toucheth the earth and it rocketh, and all that dwell thereon wither, | and it swelleth up wholly like the Nile, and sinketh like the Nile of Egypt, || who hath built in heaven his roof-chambers, and founded his vault over the earth, | who calleth to the sea-depths and poureth them over the earth's face, Yahvé his name ! ||

viii. 4-6. By way of example 'Amôs again touches on the case which had been mentioned before all others above ii. 6, 7, but it is here immediately explained further. Since the kingdom at that time paid but little attention to the rights of trade, covetous kingdoms might treat weights, measures, and money with great arbitrariness, and easily alter them after every feast, with every week; the balance seemed "a deceitful" one from its very nature; and thus these people, who eagerly as it were *pant after* (ii. 7) *the helpless*, or, more plainly, *after the destruction of the helpless*, scarcely wait until the festival is passed to bring the poorer classes wholly into their power and slavery by means of such and similar methods of deception.—But since this is not the time to mention in detail all other sins of these people with equal particularity, the threat breaks forth vehemently, ver. 7, sq., again against *all* such deeds; as certainly as Yaqob who, acc. vi. 1, might be proud in a good sense is now *too proud* (vi. 8) in a perverse way, so certainly are his deeds too provoking, challenging too loudly the last punishment, the whole earth must tremble as if smitten by the divine anger at such wickedness, and the sea again overstep all its bounds as at the period of Chaos, rising and falling like the overwhelming Nile!

viii. 9-14. Accordingly, because they pervert everything, ver. 5, to them also the light will be suddenly and without remedy turned into night, their wild joy into mourning, ver. 9, sq., comp. *supra* v. 18-20; Joel iii. 4; Isa. iii. 34; so that the end of Samaria will be like a bitter mourning day for the loss of an only son (the last member, ver. 10, explains the foregoing verse just as ver. 4); and instead of despising the prophetic word as was shown above, they will then when it is too late to hear it, suffer that hunger and thirst which is the very worst, namely, for the divine word, which truly heals and revives, vv. 11-14, comp. Isa. viii. 20; ver. 12 like iv. 8, but with quite a different reference. Even those who are the strongest and fairest bodily, the virgins, iv. 1, and warriors, ii. 14-16, who



now in their infatuation run after all the idols, will then have to fall a prey to this famine. But since *the sin* (lit. guilt) of *Samaria* is really the idol-god by whom it is always falling into sin, the prophet may briefly say, that these infatuated people swear by this sin, although as he immediately says in explanation, they in reality swear by the god himself or by the way to him, which, acc. iv. 4; v. 5, is so popular. The  $\delta \theta ε ο ς σου$  of the LXX. is an incorrect repetition of the previous formula.

5. ix. 1-6. But if it is certain, as is said in the last verse, that ultimately all calamity proceeds from the perversity of their conduct towards the divine, it is befitting that not only the altars of the gods should be shattered by the divine wrath, iii. 14, but that this ruin of the idol-worship should also be the ruin of the whole community, which gathers around such altars. All considerations ultimately bring the prophet to idolatry as the source of all that is perverse, and at the same time to the chief altar of this impure worship in Bethel, which he himself had seen surrounded by a misled congregation, and had above had in his mind in a similar passage, iii. 14. Accordingly it once appeared to him in holy vision (and into this vision everything that has to be said here at the close is compressed), as if he had seen the true God hovering above the false altar, just as he was commanding one of his servants (angels) to smite the knop of the altar (the horns, iii. 14) in such a way that from this truly divine blow the bottom, the entire altar from the top to its groundsels, should tremble (Isa. vi. 4) and the pieces of the shattered altar fly upon the heads of the congregation assembled below, mortally wounding them! Then the reprobate congregation fly asunder, pursued at the same time by the sword (of the Assyrians); but neither does flight help the guilty, as is further beautifully described, vv. 2-4, no place being conceivable, no situation, where they would be secure from the divine punishment; compassion must be impossible until the evil in this form has been annihilated.

With reference to mythical sea-monsters, see Quatremère's *Memoires Geogr. et hist. sur l'Egypte*, t. II. p. 492. In other respects comp. Ps. lxxiii. 24-24, and a subsequent repetition of this, Ps. cxxxix. 7, sq. This terribly serious final utterance is then finally, ver. 5, sq. confirmed with the most solemn oath by Him who in invisible heights builds as it were light, airy *solaria* or roof-houses with the finest clouds over the arch of heaven which he had made, these *solaria* forming his unapproachable abode (repeated later Ps. civ. 3), and, which is of special significance here, who has only to touch the earth to make it (and sinners upon it) tremble.

On viii. 8. נגדש resumes the previous עלה, the antithesis to both then follows in נשקע, for נשקה must be an old error for נשקע, comp. more briefly ix. 5.

In viii. 12, the way in which 'Amôs describes the land in its whole circumference is remarkable: from *sea to sea*, from the Dead Sea in the south-east in 'Amôs's neighbourhood to the great sea on the west; and since this sea extends far into the north, it may then be said of the land *from north to east*, whither, far into the south, the boundaries of the kingdom at that time extended, acc. vi. 14, as well as other evidence. These few strokes were therefore as amply sufficient to describe the extent of the Ten Tribes at that time as those similar and yet different ones, Ps. lxxii. 8, were to sketch the boundaries of the whole land of David.

On ix. 1: בַּצֵּעֵם is (comp. § 253 a): *shatter them upon*, i.e. throw the shattered pieces upon . . . .

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### III. THE FINAL PROSPECT, CH. IX. 7-15.

But this overthrow, however necessary all this renders it, can neither be the last conceivable event in the development of divine things, nor the last prospect in the whole expectation of the prophet. On the contrary, here the great turn of the thought occurs: the punishment and destruction of the evil in

the community is not an object *per se*, but its design is the restoration of prosperity and the perfecting of all the blessings contemplated in the foundation of the community; this joyous cheering outlook into the great future can alone constitute the final prophetic anticipation in this series of true expectations, and 'Amôs closes his book with this eternal hope, reconciling all former discords in this higher harmony. The transition to this is formed by the consideration, ver. 7, that the higher hand of Yahvé controls also the great fortunes of nations, which for long periods are decisive, their wanderings, *e.g.* and their reciprocal relations towards each other, a truth which if it holds of all nations must especially hold of Israel; whence follows as a preliminary, that this God is able both to scatter Israel, or cause it to be overcome by the heathen and led away captive, and is also able with equal ease to bring it back again. Therefore Israel, especially the northern kingdom, must now fall and go into captivity, as is here once more repeated, in all its rigour, but yet only to destroy the evil in it and to purify the whole nation, vv. 8-10; and how glorious is the regeneration of the whole people after this sifting and reformation! vv. 11-15.

Are ye not as the sons of the Kushites unto me,  
 ye sons of Israel? saith Yahvé; | have I not led  
 up Israel from Egypt, and the Philistines from  
 Kaftor and Arám from Qîr? || —Behold the eyes  
 of the Lord Yahvé are upon the sinful kingdom  
 that I should destroy it from the face of the land, |  
 —only that I will not utterly destroy the house of  
 Yaqob, saith Yahvé. || For behold I command and  
 shake the house of Israel amongst all nations | just  
 as one shaketh with the sieve and there falleth no  
 10 corn to the earth: || by the sword will die all sin-  
 ners of my people, | who say “the evil will not  
 reach and fall upon us!” ||

On that day will I raise up the fallen tabernacle of David, | and wall up its breaches and raise up its ruins, and build it as in the days of old, || that they may inherit the remnant of Edóm and of all the nations upon whom my name is named, saith Yahvé who doeth this! || — Behold days come, saith Yahvé, and the plowman joineth himself to the reaper and the grape-treader to the seed-caster, | and the mountains drop must, and all the hills flow down; || and I turn the fortune of my people Israel, and they build waste cities and settle, | plant vineyards and drink their wine, dig gardens  
 15 and eat their fruit; || and I plant them upon their land, | and they shall no more be extirpated from their land which I have given to them! saith Yahvé thy God.

V. 7. Am I not able to translate you from one land into another, just as I do with other nations, and have I not done it with you and others in early times? The instances from the history of foreign nations must at that time have been generally known; the Kushites had probably just at that very time advanced from Arabia to Africa, because in this passage where the present is spoken of they are located there; the migration of the Philistines from Kaftór, mentioned elsewhere (Gen. x. 14), dates back to much more ancient times, that of the Syrians into Damascus, etc. from Qîr, i. 5, mentioned here only, certainly still further back; Qîr being what was subsequently called Armenia, a name probably originally meaning the same as Arám.—Vv. 8-10. The house of Yaqob, or Israel, is here evidently the community in its ancient meaning and extent, as it has existed from ancient times, in contrast with this separate and recently originated kingdom: this community

shall not be *wholly* destroyed; but, on the contrary, to put everything in one brief figure, shall be only shaken as it were amongst the heathen, just as a sieve is shaken, causing merely the chaff but no corn to fly away. Thus ver. 8 at the commencement is connected with the end of ver. 4, but the thought quickly advances to the truth which has its place here; and what the chaff is which cannot remain from the sifting, the strong words of the first chief section, ver. 10, comp. vi. 3, plainly show: they are the sinners against the holy spirit, who mock at the prophetic threats, and boast that the threatened evil will not be able to surprise them.

The regeneration externally, ver. 11, sq. is the restoration of the former unity and strength of the kingdom, as it was, for instance, under David in its highest prosperity, so that all the nations which formerly were included within the true Theocracy may again come to it, however many portions of it have now fallen away. Looked at internally, it consists, vv. 13-15, in the inexhaustible blessing of the renovated people, inasmuch as the pursuits of labour and its fruits will never again be interrupted as at present in a land of ever increasing blessing, ver. 13, sq. in antithesis to iv. 6-9; v. 11 (comp. earlier Joel iv. 18, and later Lev. xxvi. 5), so that there is found such a firmly established repose and security of things that no future disturbance like that at present can break the divine peace, ver. 15, as antithesis to vii. 17; ix. 9, sq.

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On the *inf. abs.* הַשְׂמִיר before אֲשַׁמֵּר, ver. 8 comp. § 280 c., 312 c.—The words, ver. 10 *b*, may be explained indeed from the foregoing ii. 12; v. 10; vii. 13; vi. 3, but they may be most simply understood in the sense given above. The rapid change of the affixed pronouns of ver. 11 is remarkable but correct; because really the whole kingdom is understood by this *tabernacle*, the suff. *fem. pl.* refers to the cities of the land, iv. 3, the suff. *masc. sing.* which follows, to Israel, and then the suff.

*fem. sing.* to Jerusalem. But it is not easy to reproduce this in our languages. Comp. further *Geschichte des v. Israel*, VI. p. 472.

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## 2. HOSÉA.

At first sight this book of Hoséa appears dark and enigmatical, and it would undoubtedly greatly contribute towards its perfect interpretation if we possessed only as many genuinely historical reminiscences with respect to Hoséa as we possess in the case of 'Amôs. But the fact is, besides the meagre heading, i. 1, which, however, in its present form cannot owe its origin to Hoséa himself, we have not a single historical note about this prophet. Nevertheless, whoever really penetrates into the meaning—and that word by word—of this proportionately extensive book, will find that he has some sure marks, which do not leave him in doubt with respect to the country and fortunes of this prophet.

That Hoséa is properly a prophet of the Northern kingdom, would be more than probable from the subject-matter and the pervading tone of his book. As in the case of Canticles, the objects familiar to the prophet, his imagery and his descriptions, point to the Northern kingdom. To say nothing of Lebanon, xiv. 6-9, the distant Misspah or Gilead in the East and Tabor in the West, are with him representative pictures of the entire land, which only suit the Northern kingdom, v. 1 ; vi. 8 ; xii. 12. The particularity of his acquaintance with the capital of Gilead, beyond Jordan, a town not often referred to, is specially remarkable, vi. 8 ; xii. 12 ; and the inference is, that he had personally seen it. Of other towns besides, he mentions in decisive passages Sikkém in connexion with a very special occurrence there, vi. 9 ; the towns Bethel and Gilgal, both in the Northern kingdom, often mentioned by 'Amôs on account

of the worship of Astarte celebrated in them, and the former under the name of Betháven, a paronomastic conversion of its original name due to 'Amôs (v. 5) and after him common in the mouths of the prophets; iv. 15; ix. 15; x. 5, 8, 15; xii. 12. Further, Samaria very frequently. And when he speaks it is not merely that he has Israel, *i.e.* the Northern kingdom and its chief tribe Ephráim, before his eyes especially: but he knows this kingdom, as every line betrays, from personal acquaintance, and in all its relations and circumstances, its joys and its calamities, in the very heart of its aims and its prospects. The whole prophetic book in reality takes its origin from the Northern kingdom, and again professes to be written primarily for this kingdom. This is precisely the distinctive feature of this book, which confers on it high historical importance, and leaves it no rival amongst the other prophetic writings. It is the Ephráimite prophetic book, the truest voice from the inmost heart of the kingdom, which was not merely heard addressing this kingdom, but which the spirit had sent forth while it was yet time, although the final death-throes of this kingdom were approaching, from out of its own midst, that it might be its own judge. 'Amôs also says much with regard to this kingdom, yet what he writes neither originated in it alone nor was directed to it alone. In the case of Hoséa, on the other hand, in every sentence it appears that he had not merely visited this kingdom, as 'Amôs had done, but that he is acquainted with it from the depths of his heart, and follows all its doings, aims and fortunes, with the profound feelings gendered of such a sympathy as is conceivable in the case of a native prophet only.

A few times Hoséa betrays by express words that he belongs by birth to the Northern kingdom. There is no difficulty in supposing that the prophet is uttering his own experience, vi. 10, "In the house of Israel *I* saw a horrible thing;" and vii. 5, "On the day *of our* king," where from the context only the kings of Samaria are spoken of.

On the other hand, we have indications of an opposite nature, which show that Hoséa must have lived in Yuda, at least when he was writing our book. To go no further, the manner in which the mutual relations of Israel and Yuda are mentioned is remarkable. In the first great section, ch. i.-ii., the entire prophetic censure centres around Israel alone, to the exclusion of Yuda, which appears, on the other hand, as the one star of deliverance in the future, as a kingdom of hope, i. 7. There is no doubt but that Yuda at that time, in comparison with Israel, retained still some of the virtues of its youth and gave larger hope for the future; still this decided separation between the two, this glance directed towards Yuda with such unalloyed hope, can be best understood if the prophet at that time looked at Yuda from a distance merely, without seeing it with his own eyes. It is otherwise in the following sections, ch. iii.-xiv. It is true hope is directed to Davíd, *i.e.* a new Davíd, from Yuda, iii. 5; comp. ii. 2, and the historical view connected with it is, that the monarchy of the Northern kingdom, having originated in inconsiderate revolt and other vain ambitions, could therefore never lead to good, but was on its way to inevitable dissolution, iii. 4; vii. 5-7; viii. 4; x. 3-7; xiii. 1, 10, sq. Yuda as such, however, never appears as the anchor of hope: on the contrary, in the few passages where it is mentioned, it is represented as exposed to great danger by the example of Israel, iv. 15, or even as likewise corrupt and falling with Israel, v. 5, 10, 12-14; vi. 11; viii. 14; x. 11; or, at last, expressly as still falling short of what was required of it, xii. 1, 3. Here, therefore, we seem to have a clear indication that Hoséa himself became gradually better acquainted with Yuda, and with deep sorrow grew more and more convinced that in Yuda too, as an external institution, as a kingdom of that time, there was not a much firmer foundation. With what deep, anxious, apprehension he entreats Israel the first time that Yuda's transgression must be mentioned, that at least it would not lead Yuda



astray also, iv. 15! And how he complains at last, xii. 1, 3, that Yuda likewise disappoints his hope!—An express proof that Hoséa wrote the book in Yuda, is the description of the alarm which proceeds from South to North, v. 8, sq., in which the words “behind thee, O Benjamin,” leave no doubt but that the writer was living in Yuda. Another clear indication lies in the particle *there*, with which simply Hoséa at times refers to the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, vi. 7, 10; ix. 15; xiii. 8. This has exactly the appearance of the prophet having written in Yuda.

And, in fact, we have here no discrepancy. We have only to combine these scattered indications into a whole. Hoséa, a native of the Northern kingdom, after he had long laboured there, must have come into Yuda, and there have written the book before us. It is true we do not know exactly what caused him to go into Yuda: yet if the expressions, iv. 4, sq., and ix. 7, sq., are correctly understood and compared together, and when further it is seen that Hoséa in these remarkable expressions, which occur at the beginning and the end of long sections, can only refer to his own personal experiences in the Northern kingdom, it may be clearly gathered, that he had had to contend with the most violent animosities as well as secret machinations and bloody persecutions as long as he lived in that land. He came forward there as Prophet publicly before the assembled people in a Temple, ix. 8; yet even the sanctity of this place did not protect him. He was forbidden to speak as a Prophet, iv. 4, though he might become almost beside himself, and mad at such a persecution of the spirit and all these abominations, ix. 7. We have clearly here stray leaves from the history of severe storms which filled the life of Hoséa with commotion in his first and proper father-land, and we can well understand why he should at last, voluntarily or by compulsion, flee into Yuda.

The nicer peculiarities of his language and orthography are such that no one can help seeing that Hoséa has a peculiar

dialect; and as, according to what we have seen, the region of his birth was most probably the north-eastern district beyond the Yordan, we have to consider these peculiarities as some traces of that dialect. For instance, an interrogative particle does not occur in his writings, which, although it is wanting elsewhere, acc. § 324 *b*, is nowhere else so regularly absent as here (ii. 10; iv. 16; vii. 2; ix. 13; x. 9; xi. 3, 9).\* And how decidedly Hoséa belongs to the kingdom of the Ten Tribes with respect to the artistic peculiarities of his style, will appear below.

Finally, not the least sign of Hoséa's being a genuine Prophet of the Northern kingdom is the fact, that he as no other speaks of the importance and power of the prophets, and considers them as one of the most essential and firmest stays of the kingdom.† For in this especially lay the difference between this kingdom and Yuda.‡ And it is not till this has been well considered, that the great deep sorrow, which had seized Hoséa as he at length saw that his extremest prophetic exertion to save this kingdom was fully nullified, can be appreciated. His book expresses vividly this pain, as it borders on despair.

II. When we come to inquire in what time and how long Hoséa had been a prophet in the Northern kingdom, the first thing that appears is, that he must have laboured there as prophet at two different periods and in two very different conditions of this kingdom. The section ch. i.-ii. places the reader in the time when the famous house of Yehû in the person of Yarob'am II. ruled in the Northern kingdom, the

\* This deficiency points to an Aramaic peculiarity. The Syrians subsequently adopted even the *āpa* as a simple interrogative. Other peculiarities are mentioned below. The form **הִזְנָה** also, iv. 10, 18 twice; v. 3. is probably from the same source, as well as **הִזְנָה** viii. 9, since the *imperf.* is always **יִזְנֶה**, **יִזְנֶה**, *part.* **זִנָּה**; **זִנָּה** only ix. 1.

† Acc. to iv. 5; vi. 5; vii. 12; ix. 8, sq.; xi. 2; xii. 11, 14. Comp. the remarks below on these passages in detail.

‡ Comp. the *Hist. of Israel*, IV. p. 5, sq. (III p. 443, sq.)

nation being therefore to all appearance still great and powerful. And really there is no other charge against it than the idolatry promoted by the house of Yehû, whilst nevertheless a near end to this house is announced and the necessity of the captivity of the nation is foreseen. We meet here, therefore, with a historical condition which has still similarity with that described by 'Amôs, only that Hoséa certainly did not come forward as prophet before the end of the long reign of Yarob'am II., when the offences rebuked by 'Amôs had already developed themselves more fully, but yet no new ones had been added to them.

The pieces ch. iii.-xiv. are all different. They everywhere manifestly describe the results of the terrible internal storms which swept over the Northern kingdom after the death of Yarob'am, changing its condition almost from the very base and adding a mass of new offences to the old ones. We see here the most exact picture of the times under the kings Zakharya, Shallum and Menahem, times which are described, 2 Kings xv. 8-20, with such brevity that we can form no vivid and complete idea of them without the help of Hoséa's book. The death of Yarob'am appears to have been the signal for the outbreak of those fearful internal conflicts from the throes of which the nation had finally to suffer dissolution. And precisely in those first years after Yarob'am the internal confusion appears to have been most violent, because the kingdom had been so great and powerful, and the contending parties, therefore, still found much to desire and much to destroy. The rule of Yarob'am was on the whole powerful externally, but internally purely unjust, a mere military government: i. 5, 7; ii. 20; 'Amos ii. 14-16; vi. 13. When, then, the strong hand of this soldier-king was withdrawn, the evils which lie hidden in all such governments rapidly developed themselves. These evils are such as must arise where one estate, and that the one which is so often the most dangerous to the common good of the whole kingdom, is too greatly favoured and consequently

grows arrogant. Endless plots and civil wars wasted the land ; all kings were murdered, vii. 7 ; one dynasty was quickly supplanted by another, the kings and princes even which may have maintained their supremacy for a short time were without honour or esteem, vii. 3, sq. ; and together with all this, universal insecurity, undermining of all social order, boundless immorality, especially since in addition to the older perversities of the kingdom idolatry in every form increased. The priests also, and not merely those of the strange gods, but even those of Yahvé, the ancient national God, who was worshipped still under the image of a calf, zealously shared in all the wickednesses, and became either themselves robbers, vi. 9, or otherwise by their greediness promoted the sins of the nation, iv. 6-10. But whilst the abominations of men and the dangers of the kingdom rapidly increased, no one would listen to the voice of a true prophet. That by this internal disorganization and corruption all respect from abroad as well as the wide sway of the kingdom of Yarob'am over foreign nations must within a few years be lost, is very evident, and is often strongly insisted upon by Hoséa. Even the contending parties themselves thought to get help from abroad. Some of them looked towards Assyria, which was then growing rapidly strong ; others towards Egypt. The Assyrian party, with king Menahem at their head, had already proposed an alliance with the Assyrian king Phûl, for support against internal enemies, and had offered gifts, *i.e.* tribute ; v. 13 ; vii. 8-11 ; viii. 9, sq. ; x. 4 ; xii. 2. These relations towards foreign powers had not got beyond this stage at the time when Hoséa wrote : Phûl appears indeed not yet to have entered the kingdom, to restore order and to take tribute as he thought fit, as is related 2 Kings xv. 19, sq. ; still less had the Assyrians under their king Tiglath Pileser rent away Galilee and Gilead, 2 Kings xv. 29. For of all these important events there is no historical mention in Hoséa ; but, on the contrary, Gilead and Tabor still form the essential constituents of the kingdom, and the frequently men-

tioned Gilead appears as anything rather than a conquered land. Accordingly *Hoséa* belongs to a comparatively early age and wrote long before *Yesaya*.

III. During a part of this second period, *Hoséa* still passed through some trials in the Northern kingdom, inasmuch as he describes this kingdom most particularly and vividly, as only an eye-witness is able. And as in general the distresses and perversities of an age affect no one more powerfully and painfully than the true prophet, who standing in the midst of their whirl still opposes to them, without faltering or fear, his word and his entire life, so from ix. 7 and the whole tone and character of his language we see that the immense follies and abominations of this time, which he had himself witnessed and endured, had made upon *Hoséa* the deepest impression. The great terrible woe of the condition of the nation has rolled itself upon him alone as it were, has made him almost beside himself and inconsolable, so that at first he sees before him nothing but an awful destruction and general overthrow, and however varied are the subjects he considers, he can only prophecy calamity and punishment. If even the man of an ordinary type with a feeling heart is in danger of suddenly losing his self-possession in word and deed at the sight of such a state of things, how much greater is this danger for him who must see in his own persecution the persecution of the divine spirit itself, in his own rejection the expressed rejection of the true God himself by the whole kingdom! ix. 7, 8. He feels now that the last help which would come, the prophetic, will not avail to avert the overthrow of the whole nation, yea, that the prophet must himself perish in the general overthrow, iv. 5. In such circumstances, must not he, seized by unutterable pain, become as it were a mad prophet of evil tidings, who can see in all directions nothing but disappointment and destruction, and must in all cases bring forward with the bitterest truth nothing but the darkest side of things? In *Yuda* also, whither he fled, he ultimately saw his hope disappointed so far as the present was concerned!

In fact, we have here the one side, as it were the human side, of the peculiar character of his spirit. He is the prophet of high-tragic grief, of the keenest and deepest sense of the ungodly, of an agitated sorrow over endless abominations and perversities, of an anger which borders on mad rage in proportion as his tenderest sympathy is violated. To his painfully agitated heart, foreseeing calamity, it is impossible to unfold his thoughts in calm long sentences, and to arrange his words in firm and strong order. The thought is too full, the sentence rapid and abrupt, the whole discourse often breaking itself up as it were in sobs. But exhaustless is the sorrow, endless the grief wherever the mind turns, and ever and anon the tossing restless discourse begins again, like the wild cry of an anguish that can hardly be mastered.

Connected with this peculiarity of the spirit of the prophet, which was largely determined by his nature and his time, is his character as a poet. It may be said with justice that he and Yôél are the most poetical among the earlier prophets, and each in his own manner. Hoséa has a rich and vivid imagination, while his style is full, brief and sententious. And notwithstanding several strong figures, which simply testify to the poetic boldness and originality as well as the simple straightforwardness of those times, he manifests great tenderness and warmth of language. His poetry is everywhere purely original (with the exception of a few manifest reminiscences from 'Amôs iv. 3; viii. 14), full of force of thought and beauty of treatment. Hence much is here flung off with wonderful ease, which was subsequently taken up by others and expanded in various forms. Yet in his style the soft and the flowing prevails, and then again the violently strained and abrupt, whilst the overwhelming sorrow causes much to be rather indicated than completed. Upon his entire language also there lies the oppression of that age and of his heart heavily laden therewith: there is no previous prophet so elegiac as Hoséa; that ancient section Isa. ch. xv.-xvi. is alone compa-

able to it, and is generally very similar. In fact, this prophet, who possesses genuine poetic spirit and power, and whose thoughts follow in great and beautiful proportions, is urged to speak really by sorrow; a divine amazement, anger and sorrow give him words, which roll on in exhaustless stream, yet always beautiful, soft and tender, all aglow with the warmth of the poet-heart.

Yet, though it was after his own most painful experiences had been passed through, Hoséa would never have been and remained a prophet, although he might thus have become a poet, if he had only given himself up to uncontrolled sorrow. As a prophet of Yahvé he can foresee the necessity of the destruction of the present form of the kingdom, and in all sternness declare it, but he must not overlook the eternal truths and hopes which lie beyond this, and must in spite of all coming judgments ultimately present these truths and hopes emphatically as the only light which scatters the darkness of the present and the near future. And in the case of Hoséa this purely divine side of the prophetic presentiment is not absent; in his case too we see the resort of all prophecy to its final source. In such times and with such feelings it is most difficult with a bright eye to discern a better future. Before his prophetic eye stands too clearly the picture of the overthrow of a kingdom that has just been great and powerful, of the dispersion of the nation into Assyria and Egypt, of the recurrence of times of Egyptian slavery. And what is still more, the soul of the prophet is very deeply impressed with the sense of the shocking nature of the moral abominations from which there appears to be no possibility of improvement and resuscitation. Accordingly his more favourable presentiments only force their way as after the final effort of a severe conflict, as if they owed their origin only to that last divine necessity which cannot be overcome by any grief or despair, but just when all seems lost according to human judgment irresistibly displays its power, ii. 1-3, 16-25; iii. 5; especially xi. 8-11;

xiii. 14. It is only at the close, in a special section, that pure exhortation and hope without any more struggles acquire full strength, and after the finished victory appear in wonderful force and beauty, xiv. 2-10. But this struggle is not so to be understood as if the prophet had really a stronger natural love of the troubled and the gloomy, of threat and punishment. On the contrary, there is no prophet in whom love is so clearly manifested as in Hoséa. In his sensitive and tender heart dwells a love which in the last extremity can be overcome by nothing, and which is the profoundest characteristic of his nature. And as he feels this love in his prophetic heart, he also knows that it dwells in the divine heart and mind as that unquenchable holy fire which behind all anger and punishment remains unweakened, and as it were burns with desire to break forth, to lavish its riches and blessings on its object, iii. 1-5; vii. 13, sq.; ix. 10; xi. 1-4, 8-11. This precisely is to Hoséa the corner-stone of the certainty of all his hopes: Yahvé, whose love long ago formed and trained the community, can never forsake his own work, his love must consummate what it desired and began, even the salvation of that community, which just because it has experienced this love from the very first, being mindful of its origin, must at all events finally return to the true source of love and salvation. And just when it comes to the point where the grieved human prophetic anticipation can find nothing on all sides but necessary and severest punishment, just when it is about to pronounce the final hopeless destruction, then, as if suddenly alarmed and self-destroyed, it starts back before the higher divine anticipation, which at the decisive moment while there is still time forces its way victoriously from its retreat. The internal struggle therefore is made so painful only by the great but righteous grief of the prophet over the present and the inexorable calamities of the immediate future. But then first does Hoséa become the genuine prophet, when in spite of this struggle, on the one hand, he neither glosses the events of the present nor with-



holds his true presentiment of greater punishment, nor, on the other, lets go the eternal hopes, but rather presents these in the stronger light the more that dark presentiment threatens to eclipse the present.

Here it is that we recognise the second much more important peculiarity of this prophet : no older prophet has such profound and beautiful conceptions as he of the love of Yahvé which outlasts all things and heals all evils. To this prophet the love of Yahvé is the inmost cause and deepest root of his relation to Israel. From earliest times love was employed in creating this community ; it was violated and troubled by Israel ; it punishes now in deep grief ; but it can never deny its nature and fail ; it will ever save, and one day must heal all evils. All this is described with the most glowing sympathy, and in the most various forms. But no figure is more suitable than that of the wedded relation. As the wife is one with her husband by an indissoluble bond, and the faithful husband strongly resents unfaithfulness in his wife, punishes her, or even puts her away for a time, yet after all can really never cease to love her, so although the ancient community, the mother of that yet living, has in her unfaithfulness to Yahvé borne unworthy, disobedient children, yet his love never forsakes her, although he is angry and punishes her.

IV. Accordingly the subject of the book of Hosea, is the prophetic description of the love of Yahvé as it has been wounded times without number by the guilt of Israel, is necessitated to chastise, and yet in its inmost nature remains always the same ; the aim of the book is to exhort the nation not to increase their endless pains and sufferings by further resistance to this love, but immediately to again surrender themselves wholly to it, in order that they may be healed by it and enjoy the high happiness of fulfilling their national calling. The prophet's anguish breathes forth in heavy sighs what it is that weighs him down ; the alarming earnestness of prophetic foreboding pours itself forth unrestrained against all the abuses

of the age, in accusation, reproof, and threatening ; but the true nature of divine love is also manifested, how in its heart of hearts it will not destroy but heal and call all to itself. But here a question that cannot be avoided arises. Is the book of the prophet in the form in which it has come into our hands exactly as it was when he first published it ?

1. On close examination we discover, that the book is a whole beautifully executed in complete accordance with a definite artistic plan, and that this whole has been so well preserved in the main that at least we are able to recognise plainly enough its exceedingly noble and transparent outline. We have only properly to understand this artistic outline and execution to perceive that it was published finally by the prophet as a whole in the form before us. It is not meant by this that Hoséa may not at an earlier period have written some work before he finally published this book in Yuda which was especially intended for the kingdom of the Ten Tribes ; on the contrary, we may quite well concede that in ch. i. sq. is contained the most essential matter of an earlier work of Hoséa, which he worked up into the present one when he projected it : and that this is substantially the fact, will appear immediately. But what is meant is, that the book as it was finally sent from Hoséa's hand into the world possesses the most complete and beautiful internal unity, and that all its parts follow as from one fundamental thought ; and this is the result of all closer examination and knowledge.

Now, it was shown above, that Hoséa's public work fell in three very different periods of time. He laboured in the Northern kingdom in the reign of Yarob'am II., then in the first stormy days after his death, and finally he came to Yuda, where he still kept his eye upon the fortunes of the Ten Tribes and after a time published his book. Expecting, accordingly, that his book will bear the plain traces of these three divisions of his public life, we meet distinct proofs of this even in the large sections into which it falls. For in ch. i. and ii. the

time when Hoséa *first* felt that he was called to be a prophet and worked as such, is expressly distinguished: what he then performed and experienced is summarised in ch. i. and ii.: and plainly enough ch. iii. 1, a later and entirely different period from that is distinguished, when he laboured in another manner following the divine call.

2. But Hoséa was also in this respect a genuine prophet of the ancient type, as well as a prophet from the Northern kingdom, that his whole domestic and public life became nothing less than one harmonious expression of his fundamental prophetic thought. Since therefore the fundamental thought of the love of Yahvé as Hoséa conceived it belonged at that time still to those rare truths which were difficult to understand, he resolved in projecting the book before us to elucidate this thought by lifting somewhat the veil from his own domestic experiences, in order that it might be made more intelligible to the dullest of his readers. Accordingly this thought has been presented in our book in wonderful clearness by the aid of the productive and poetic imagination of our author, at first in the form of a symbolical *sign* or an embodiment of the thought in daily life. For careful consideration will not permit us to doubt but that the prophet had had the most painful experiences in his own married life, and that he does not depart from historical facts in this matter. For since far from his former house, he interweaves into this symbolical sign the purely historical name of a woman which could not, like the other names occurring here, have a poetic origin, we can only suppose that this entire historico-symbolic representation is only a free remodelling of an experience he had actually passed through; he must himself have experienced in his own house the unfaithfulness of such a woman, by name Gómer, daughter of Dibláim, only that in writing his book he handled and remodelled the relationship freely in accordance with the spiritual meaning; and probably at the time when he wrote his book far away in Yuda, the woman was already dead, so that he need not scruple to mention her name. We know

that the genuine prophets took but one wife, and monogamy is here presupposed as the only true marriage.\* That Hoséa should have had such a painful experience with his wife is not so very surprising, when we remember the general corruption of morals at that time in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, as he describes it, iv. 2; v. 4, sq. and elsewhere; and as a matter of course he would seek to approve himself in this relationship as a genuine prophet of Yahvé, not increasing his wife's unfaithfulness by his own, endeavouring in all respects to leave pure love alone to rule, thereby reforming all human perversity. When therefore he looked back upon all these his experiences, it must have appeared to him, that on a smaller scale he had only passed through what the true God had experienced with that whole nation which he had formed and loved with so peculiar a love; and it must also have seemed to him, that what he had experienced and the best that he had done under the painful circumstances was small indeed compared with what his Lord had done and must still do towards Israel. Thus he commences his book by narrating the history of his own experience and conduct, making that an image and symbol of the higher relation, in order at the very outset to arouse attention by a few startling lines of a strange narrative, which would be clear to the most unintelligent, and excite the most indifferent to further inquiry.†

And such rough and severe fresco-strokes are desirable when they are needed. The divine thought which is lying in the background is projected before the world in symbolism of striking similarity by this strange picturesque sign; but it

\* Comp. *Alterthümer*, p. 260, sq. (224, sq.), and the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* X. p. 190.

† Modern discussions whether the narrative of Hoséa, ch. i.-iii. is purely fictitious or not, are accordingly quite beside the mark. It would be more to the point to consider, that what a prophet of Hoséa's type and age narrates of himself must be historical so far as this is possible and intended, and that he would have made himself ridiculous if he had experienced in his own house the exact contrary of all that which he narrates here as his sad lot, although it had not fallen upon him without the divine will.

is rather adumbrated in great lines and the attention is rather directed forcibly to the solution of an enigma than satisfied. We feel that the prophet cannot be contented as a married man with his faithless wife, nor find pleasure in his children : but we ask, Why introduce that here ? Accordingly there follows the explanation, a full commentary to that vigorous fresco. The purely supernatural meaning is gradually unfolded with increasing clearness and explicitness, as it were in explanation of the enigma ; the explanation, ii. 4-25, following immediately upon the purely symbolic passage of narrative i. 2.—ii. 3. However, as a matter of first importance, we must here observe, that if Hoséa planned his book so that the striking and bold outlines of his narrative of strange things should be followed by their explanation and attestation, he might then most properly project exactly three such narrative pictures with their accompanying elucidation. For he had laboured in three different periods, and might also have undergone in his own house very different fortunes in these three periods ; and he now reviewed as a whole all that had taken place, both the small affairs of his own house and the large affairs of the history of Israel as it had at that time unrolled itself. It then appeared to him that there was a profound similarity between the two. His faithless wife had at length quite left his house, and had sought somewhere else a better one, as she thought : but notwithstanding he had at last brought her back as his legal wife, although now only as a slave, and had confined her in his house under strict discipline, in order that she might learn by this constraint, which had at length become necessary, to amend her life in retirement and solitude : this he had done only because he had considered that he was her legal husband, ultimately therefore from voluntary love and in the hope that she would in this way at least amend at last. Meanwhile the kingdom of the Ten Tribes had dethroned the house of Yehû, and had expected to find under Menahem better care and safer protection after dreadful disturbances and treachery ; but it had only

become more clear to the prophetic vision that the final overthrow of the nation must follow with greater necessity. It seemed to the prophets as if Yahvé, should it be only in a final chastisement, would make himself felt to the faithless nation at least in their captivity and dark necessity; and felt as their only true God who alone was prepared to help them.

These three main sections of the book appear on the very face of its plan and whole meaning; and although the second section is now wanting between ch. ii. and ch. iii., we are still able from another clear sign to see plainly that it once had its place here. For iii. 1-3, the same wife of Hosea is the subject spoken of: the meaning of the passage itself demands this; but it is also expressed as clearly as possible for every reader in ver. 2.\* But we see this woman in a situation which is by no means clear to us from ch. i. sq. We are able on careful reflection to supply, at least with substantial accuracy, all that must have been found in this intermediate section, but the author could not omit here what according to the great plan of his book must necessarily have been said; still less would Hoséa have made the omission, since in all that we have of his writings he approves himself as a writer perfectly master of his art. Closer examination reveals also a hiatus after ch. iv.; which will be dealt with below.†

Whether this lost section between the present chapters ii. and iii. was as extensive as the first ch. i. sq., it is no longer possible to say; probably it was not so large. The narrative did not need such breadth as the first section; and the third section ch. iii. is also compressed in small space, inasmuch as the explanation of the sign, which in the first section extended from ii. 4-25, is here briefly given ver. 4, sq.

For when Hoséa published his present book in Yuda, it ap-

\* Since it is said, "I bought *her*," which with ver. 1 alone is unintelligible, and intelligible only with the aid of ch. i.-ii.

† In other respects the book of Hoséa is evidently in a good state of preservation, and must from the very first have been circulated in a very perfect form.

peared to him altogether unsatisfactory merely to supply the great outlines of this triple and graduated symbolical narrative with explanations which can barely suffice to make their meaning intelligible. His desire was at the same time to reach men then living by exhaustive prophetic discourse, and he added therefore, in accordance with another plan and design, the great section ch. iv.-xiv. The whole book therefore, as Hoséa published it, falls into a *narrative* and a *discourse*, each of them again has suitable divisions of its own, each is complete in itself as to plan and execution, while nevertheless the long discourse might be treated as a book of itself rather than the narrative, which in the form we have it, together with its marginal or concluding elucidations, is intended as a preface in larger characters and as an anteroom to invite to further entrance and to reading and hearing. But although Hoséa distinguishes in his narrative what he had uttered at an earlier period with a closer regard to history, the long discourse itself had its origin at the time of the production of the book, and the entire subject matter of it was intended for people who were then living. And although he had published writings before under Yarob'am II. in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes itself, the plan of the present book required that he should compress into as brief a space as possible, ch. i. sq., all that he had then written. At the same time it is equally clear that the long discourse ch. iv.-xiv, although in some particulars it refers to the imagery of ch. i. sq., is intended in the main to expand still further what was indicated in ch. iii., and refers most frequently to the imagery that is used in this chapter, comp. iv. 5, 10; v. 3, 7; ix. 1; xi. 10, sq. In the unhindered flow of the discourse, ch. iv.-xiv., therefore, we have the beginning of the free unfolding of the prophet's thoughts in conformity with the extensive plan of the whole discourse, exactly after the model of ordinary elaborate prophetic orations. It is as if the profound impulses of the prophetic spirit at this point broke up the narrow forms which it had for a time submitted to, that now it might declare

itself in perfectly unfettered outbursts; although nevertheless the meaning and especially the conclusion of this explanation, in form more complete and independent, refer back to its introductory symbol, comp. *e.g.* xiii. 10, sq. with iii. 4; xi. 10, sq. with iii. 5, just as the conclusion of the first explanation, ii. 23-25, had referred back to its symbol, ii. 1-3.\*

3. We can now understand how the long section, ch. iv.-xiv., not only forms a complete whole with respect to its subject-matter, but also took an independent artistic form. Inasmuch as the thoughts of the section flow forth completely unrestrained from the prophet's heart, and this prophet is besides of a genuinely lyric nature, this large, beautiful and complete section acquires in its outward form rather a lyric than a prophetic character. As was to be expected, the essence of its thoughts remains purely prophetic; neither is there any real change as to the elevation and severity of the prophetic form of utterance, Yahvé speaking rather than the prophet: but in its free outbursts the discourse approaches to the nature of lyric poetry, acquiring thus a more tender and refined form than is customary with the prophets. How greatly the usual garb of prophetic discourse has been laid aside is evident from this fact alone, that the formula נָאם יְהוָה and all similar signs of oral prophetic discourse, which in other prophets are so frequent and are not wanting in other parts of Hoséa's writings, ii. 15, 18, are as good as not found at all in this section; only once at the preliminary conclusion of the whole, xi. 11, is נָאם יְהוָה found. However, the most important thing is, that this section is divided into as distinct and regular strophes as are met with anywhere in lyric poetry. In accordance with the development of the subject-matter, the whole discourse falls, first of all, into main sections and resting-places, forming so many smaller dis-

\* So long as I had not recognized that a section was missing after ch. ii, I was compelled to divide the book into the two unequal halves, ch. i. and ii., and ch. iii.-xiv. But I had indicated the correct view in my *History of Israel*, IV. 197. (III. p. 702.)



courses or sections. The general advance of the discourse is, (1) from the charge against the nation, in general and in its various estates, (2) to the consideration of the punishment, the necessity of which has been made evident, where it arrives at its most troubled and sorrowful point; until, (3) it gradually rises again to brighter prospects and sure hopes by means of more extended glances into the better times of old, into the destination of the community, and into the eternal love of Yahvé. But every section of the discourse developing itself thus falls again into its own regular strophes, whilst on this very account the extent of the section is limited. In the charge there occur two comparatively short strophes of five verses each; on the other hand, in the consideration of the punishment as well as in the review of past times, longer strophes occur of 7-8 Massôretic verses; in the former case there is only one section, in the latter two, but each of these three sections has five strophes. It need create no surprise that in the case of the first and third of these three longer sections, the last strophe extends to nine verses, according to the Massôretic division of verses; and that, on the other hand, the closing strophe, xi. 8-11, is somewhat shorter, is explained by the very prominent agitation of the discourse in this particular instance, with which the entire section closes. As we thus find five sections which divide themselves again with perfect symmetry into two introductory, one middle and most important with respect to its matter, and two concluding members, it is evidently not accidental that each of these five sections falls into exactly five strophes; for the first section, ch. iv. which would form the only exception, has plainly lost some six verses at the end. It would be not simply to ignore the simple and obvious art, but the real meaning of the discourse, were one to overlook this memberment of the whole oration, and exact equalization of all the larger and smaller members of the whole. In fact, it must be said, that we have not elsewhere another prophetic piece in which an artistic plan of such simplicity, and at the same time

of such noble proportions is carried out with so much consistency; and we may justly consider that we have here another noble proof of the peculiarly exalted perfection of poetical art in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, of which Canticles and Ps. xlv. are also decisive witnesses. It may be added, that the entire understanding of the book of Hoséa is rendered impossible, as long as this proportion into which the glowing stream of the words of this prophet fitted itself is not considered.

Finally, it may be shown with probability, that Hoséa wrote some of the above sections of his work at certain intervals although at no great distance apart. Such an interval is most unmistakeable between the last but one and the last section, or between ch. xi. and ch. xii., as we shall see further on. Similarly, it is remarkable that the name Samaria occurs frequently after vii. 1, while previously it did not occur where it might very well have been found; it is also remarkable that in ch. iii. the prophet suddenly speaks of himself in the first person, in ch. i. he had without variation chosen the third person. The conclusion to be drawn from this fact is no other than that the prophet did not write his book at one sitting, or on one day, and was not very anxious about its artistic retouching; in itself no unwelcome discovery. The most important of these phenomena is the preliminary conclusion at the end of ch. xi. And notwithstanding all these minor breaks, the fact remains untouched that the book as we have it was written upon a decided, artistic plan, and has been preserved as a whole in its original form; there is only the present *heading*, which cannot have been from Hoséa's hand:

1. *The word of Yahvé which came to Hoséa son of Beerí, in the days of 'Uzzia Yotham Achaz Hizqia the kings of Juda and in the days of Yarob'am son of Yoash king of Israel.*

Since the two specifications of reigns in no respect either

agree together or are intelligible as from the hand of Hoséa, nor suit the real date of the book, the most probable supposition is, that the specification of the kings of Yuda is from the same hand to which we owe Isa. i. 1; we are then able to conclude that the rest of the heading is the original ancient heading, which is in every respect suitable, if we limit the note of the time of Yarob'am primarily to ch. i.-ii.

## THE NARRATIONS.

### I. Ch. i.-ii.

#### 1. *The sign*, ch. i. 2—ii. 3.

Not less enigmatical than difficult is the commission which Yahvé gives to the prophet: he must take a wife of whoredoms and accordingly children of whoredoms, that is, children of whom he cannot know whether they are his own or not. But without doubt the execution of this command, strange as it may appear, will not be so difficult to him, as it is for Him who proposes this enigma to realize that a whole nation, yea, his own covenant people, are unfaithful, and that He is bringing up in the members or children of his corrupt community as it were so many living memorials of the great chastisement and destruction which must necessarily come, ver. 2, sq. For the enigmatical drama immediately unfolds itself further: the woman obtains children, but as often as a child of so painful origin comes into the world, the prophet must give it a name of unhappy significance, which will refer more or less clearly to the coming destruction and the divine displeasure; these children, one daughter between two sons, are born, and then names are given to them, which are all different and yet in the most mournful sense the same,—just as the individuals or the children of the community are very unlike each other, and yet all of them only so many witnesses and pledges of the divine chastisement which is about to fall upon the entire state, which will reach also those who are individually inno-

cent. If it is hard for the father to bring up children with names of such evil omen, how hard must it be for Him who is speaking here to have in his community children who are destined to such unhappiness ! vv. 3-9.

But precisely because this destiny, were it unalterable and final, would be a contradiction in God himself, the discourse finally, ii. 1-3, changes rapidly into the very opposite tone, and with equal abruptness gives the sign of the still more marvelous conversion of these children into true children of Yahvé. All this being thrown off only in the briefest outlines, just like so many strange signs which require further explanation ; brief indications of the meaning of the enigmas are indeed interspersed, that the real divine meaning may not be left for a moment wholly doubtful, but they are only rapid interlineary words by way of precursory interpretation.

All that is historical is the name and the general characteristics of the wife of the prophet : but the names and the order of the children are pure symbols in their fitting succession and number ; the two sons and one daughter denote the Israelites of the time, men and women, comp. ii. 3.

1.

1.

2      When at first Yahvé spoke with Hoséa, Yahvé said to Hoséa “go take thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms ! | for—the land will whore faithlessly from Yahvé !” ||

2.

And he went and took Gómer daughter of Dibláim : and she conceived and bare him a son ; || then said Yahvé to him “call his name Yizre‘el ! | for yet a little while and I will punish the blood of Yizre‘el upon the house of Yehû, and destroy

5 the rule of the house of Israel; || and then on that day, | I will break Israel's bow in the valley of Yizre'el." ||

And she conceived again and bore a daughter; then said he to him "call her name Not-beloved! | for not any more will I love the house of Israel, how much less forgive them! || but the house of Yuda I will love and save them by Yahvé their God, | but will not save them by bow and by sword and by war, by horses and by horsemen."

And she weaned the Not-beloved and conceived and bore a son; || then said he "call his name Not-my-people! for ye are not my people, and I will not be yours." ||

2.

3.

1 And yet the number of the sons of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which is not measured and not numbered; | and instead of calling them "Ye are not my people" they will be called "Sons of the living God:" || and the sons of Yuda shall gather themselves together and the sons of Israel also, appoint themselves one head and advance from the land, | for great is the day of Yizre'el; || call your brothers "My people!" | and your sisters "She is beloved!" ||

1. i. 2. *Spoke with Hoséa*, according to the peculiar mode of expression, which indicates the intimate relation of the prophet to God, and is explained § 217 *c*.

2. Inasmuch as in the case of such a marriage no one can know whose the children are, in each case we are told that she

conceived only, but not by whom. For how designed this significant brevity was, appears from the contrary case, Isa. viii. 3, sq.—Yizre'el is a broad fruitful valley in the north of Palestine, and originally derived the name *'seed of God* from this fruitfulness. It is true that this meaning of the name is alluded to ii. 23, sq., the most various applications of such significant names being generally made use of by the poetic imagination; but in this passage quite different meanings predominate, which are also specially called for by the context. This valley was always the great decisive battle-field of Kanáan, upon the possession of which depended that of the whole country, comp. *e. g.* Judg. iv.-v.; vi. 33; and, what is of special import in this connexion, the rule of the house of Yehû took its sanguinary rise there, 2 Kings ch. ix.-x. Incontestably, therefore, the name was originally chosen in this passage because it carried with it such vivid reminiscences of the house of Yehû as well as of Israel, *i. e.* the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, which was ruled by this house and the name of which was very similar in sound. For the primary import with reference to the origin of this rule is no other than that Yizre'el's blood-guiltiness, the sanguinary deed to which the house of Yehû owed its origin, must soon be punished as it deserved, which was not possible in any other way than by the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel, which had taken pleasure in such deeds of horror, ver. 4; and as the end corresponds to the beginning when the future is more particularly considered, it must be precisely in the same valley which witnessed the rise of this rule and perpetuates the remembrance of all ancient atrocities, where the power of the kingdom shall be broken (by the Assyrians) in a great battle and the kingdom destroyed, ver. 5; so that, as is further said in the second and third names, the divine pity and the sacredness of the community seem to cease.

3. But how beautifully in the opposite sign, ii. 1-3, is the meaning of these three names reversed! In this valley of battle,

Yizre'el, the decisive change for the better must also take place, the great victory of the renovated Israel of both kingdoms, so that after *the day of Yizre'el* they march confidently out of the land to more extended conquests, as in the time of David, comp. Isa. xi. 13, sq.; Mic. ii. 12, sq.; iv. 14.

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*Addenda.* i. 2, תחלה *at the beginning*, or *at first when*—acc. § 332 *d*, *when at first*, therefore, since it forms the protasis to the apodosis; just as קדמה, *before*, Ps. cxxix. 6, אחר, *after*, and similar particles of time. That Yahvé and Hoséa are both named again immediately, is more needful in this heading for the sake of clearness than in Job iii. 1, sq.

1. 3. All attempts to explain the name of this woman as a fictitious invention of Hoséa have never been and never can be successful. Hoséa's manner of forming fictitious names is seen very clearly in the three instances, ver. 4—ii. 3. They are of an entirely different character from that of this woman, quite intelligible *per se*, as well as in respect of the object which they are to serve in the particular case; whilst the name of this woman gives absolutely no clear etymological and symbolical meaning, and is introduced merely as a well-known historical appellation. Had it not been the name of a known person, it would not have been needful for Hoséa to refer to this woman by any name at all; he could have written simply, *he went and took a woman of whoredoms*, and the sense of all that follows would have been equally plain.

The *bow* of Israel, i. 5, is their military force, the bow in those days representing much the same as the heavy artillery in ours. Below, ver. 7; ii. 20, when the discourse descends to particulars, the *bow* at all events stands at the head of several similar names.—The *perf.* רחצה, i. 6, comp. ii. 3, is used on account of the negative particle לא, § 320 *c*. Upon the syntax of i. 6 *b*, comp. § 354 *c*.

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2. *The explanation*, ch. ii. 4-25.

What is the meaning of this rapid series of brief enigmatical symbolical signs? especially of the sudden inversion of the previous signs at the end, ii. 1-3, which is thrown off with designed abruptness? In approaching the explanation of this, the prophet's language is at first seized with profound sorrow: for certainly He who is here the mover and governor of all, the faithful ruler of the community, has only with repressed pain threatened such calamity to the children, *i.e.* to those individuals now alive who in many cases are innocent. May they, therefore, contend with their mother, urge upon their mother, *i.e.* the community which has long existed but has now become wholly untrue to its chief, to amend her ways! vv. 4-6. For while it is true that individuals suffer with the whole people, it is equally certain that ultimately the reaction upon the whole body in the direction of amendment must proceed from individuals. But the transgression has been committed, and is still going on: accordingly there follows, vv. 7-15, with greater calmness the discussion of the great transgression of this mother, the community, and what punishments, since it seems that she cannot give up her sin, must necessarily follow to put an end to her vagaries and bring her to other feelings. Thus the final conclusion is prepared for vv. 16-25: for her sin she must endure the extremest punishment from Him who chastises her so severely, not by choice but out of love and with the object in view of restoring her to faithful love; she must again depart from the fair land of Kanáan into the waste forlorn wilderness, with the loss of all her present blessings: but even there experiencing as in the long past ages, the divine preservation and love, she will be again visited by true knowledge, humility, and love, will again feel the divine love and grace in richest measures, and will be blessed in the Messianic age, together with her children (the individuals). That is the light which falls upon this enigma, and all the above



signs are made intelligible by means of it, although for brevity's sake the above figure of the community of Israel as either a faithless or a faithful wife and mother, and of Yahvé as her husband and lord, is retained in this explanation without intermission.

This entire discourse falls into four strophes, in which the dominant symmetry is constantly recovered in spite of the agitation of the speaker; the last strophe only, as is often the case, is shortened.

## 1.

Contend with your mother contend (for she is not my wife and I not her husband), | that she remove her whoredoms from her sight, her adulteries from between her breasts! || lest I strip her naked, and set her as on the day of her birth, | and make her as a wilderness, place her as a desert, || thus slay her with thirst, | and not compassion-ate her children, because they are children of whoredoms! ||

Yea their mother has committed adultery, their engenderess acted shamefully, | yea she said "I will go after my loves who give me my bread and water, my wool and flax, my oil and drinks!" || Therefore I will hedge up thy way with thorns! | and I wall up her wall, so that she findeth not her paths; || thereupon she pursueth her lovers but doth not overtake them, and seeketh them but findeth them not, | and saith "yea I will return to my first husband, for it was better with me then than now!" ||

## 2.

10 And she knoweth not that *I* gave her the corn  
 and the must and the oil, | and multiplied silver for  
 her and gold—which they made into Báal ? || There-  
 fore I will take back my corn in its time, and my  
 must in its season, | and rescue my wool and my  
 flax—which should have covered her nakedness ! ||  
 And now I will uncover her shame before her  
 lovers' eyes, | and no one shall rescue her from  
 my hand ; || and I silence all her mirth, | her feast  
 her new-moon and sabbath, and all her solemnity, ||  
 and desolate her vine and figtree, of which she  
 said “ harlot's hire are they for me which my lovers  
 have given me,” | I make them to a forest, that  
 15 the beasts of the field devour them, || and punish  
 upon her the days of the Báals to whom she burnt  
 incense, | that she put on her nose-ring and ear-ring  
 and went after her lovers, and forgot *me* ! saith  
 Yahvé.

## 3.

Therefore will I allure her, bring her into the  
 wilderness | and speak home to her, || give her from  
 there her vineyards, and the valley *Trouble* as door  
 of hope ; | and she will respond there as in the days  
 of her youth, and as on the day when she came up  
 from the land of Egypt. ||—And then on that day,  
 saith Yahvé, thou wilt cry “ My husband !” | and  
 not call me any more “ My Báal [paramour] !” ||  
 for I remove the names of the Báals from her  
 mouth, | that they be not mentioned any more by

20 their name. || And I make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of the heaven and the worms of the earth, | bow and sword and war I break out of the land, and make them dwell peaceably. || Thus I betroth thee to me eternally; | betroth thee to me by right and by judgment, and by kindness and by compassion, || and betroth thee to me in faithfulness, | that thou mayst know Yahvé ! ||

## 4.

And then on that day I will respond, saith Yahvé, I will respond to the heaven, | and it will respond to the earth, || and the earth will respond to the corn and the must and the oil, | and they  
25 will respond to Yizre'el [God's seed]; || and I sow it for me in the land, and love the "Not-beloved," | and say to the Not-my-people "my people art thou," and it will say "My God !" ||

1. At first, vv. 4-6, the language is exactly that of an angry husband who is just about to put away his wife, who has been caught in evident unfaithfulness. Under these circumstances he might send his wife without any portion, naked and forlorn, into the wilderness, being angry also with her children as perhaps spurious: how much more may He who is here speaking drive his community from Kanáan into the waste wilderness again, in which they were once so forlorn when the nation was formed. Comp. ver. 16, sq.; xi. 1, sq.—But after a short pause the feeling of displeasure assumes a calmer and more collected form. When the entire extent of the transgression is looked at, it appears as twofold: first and foremost, it appears as unfaithfulness towards even the true and covenanted God in

impure and unlawful service of idols ; and then, as the infatuated presumption, that the blessings of life flow not from the true God but from the false gods, which are run after with the most foolish expenditure of labour. The principal error, ver. 7, is to find its appropriate correction in this, ver. 8, sq.—that the true God suddenly sends upon them a heavy and dark calamity, which so oppresses and hems them in that they can scarcely stir (Job iii. 23), like an animal imprisoned in a cage ; they will then look in vain to their idols for help and must again remember the true God, when no more than their way of access to the false gods is blocked up by external hindrances, since these gods, as dead unspiritual beings, cannot of themselves come to them.

2. The secondary error, the ignoring of the true giver of blessing, must be thereby corrected, vv. 10-15, that he, whom they in their present prosperity ignore, one day suddenly takes from them all those blessings which he and he only had given them, in order that by this means they may no more think that they receive them from their idols, nor hasten with the wealth and adornment, which Yahvé had given to them, to the prodigal and voluptuous feasts (or *days*) of the Báal idols, made of gold of this origin, for the purpose of thanking them for what they were wholly unable to give. And just as a husband who had given his wife all that she had, sustenance, clothing and adornment, must be angry with her if she were to clothe and adorn herself only to go secretly to her paramour, as can be shown to be the case with her who was caught in the act, so Yahvé has resolved to leave his community to be conquered and dishonoured by barbarous and devastating enemies, chasing *her* into exile, to take from her all the blessings of the fair Kanáan together with the joyous feasts of all kinds which are celebrated there. Conquest is alluded to most plainly, ver. 14, comp. Mic. iii. 12.

3. The conclusion of all this, as it is expressed in another tone, is, therefore, ver. 16, sq., that she must go into exile, in-

deed, into the wilderness (Rev. xii. 6, 14), yet only in order that there she may remember her original vocation and dignity as well as her true lord and love, and, having amended her ways, may be saved: which is confidently expected and foretold. For more truly and lastingly is Yahvé a loving husband and father than an angry and chastising husband; and just as the latter punishes a disobedient but promising child with great reluctance and prefers to allure it by caressing and soothing means to the unhappy place of punishment, in order that it may endure the severe chastisement with as little danger as possible, so Yahvé with benevolent precaution and love purposes to allure his community to her place of punishment; in this sorrowful period he will encourage her the more, in love exhorting her to patience (Is. xl. 1, sq.); neither there will he forsake or destroy her, but, as formerly under Moses, so wonderfully will he preserve her that it will be as if the vineyards, which were destroyed according to ver. 14, should bloom again in the very desert, and as if the melancholy and gloomy valley of *Akhar*, on the borders of the desert and the Holy Land, through which the Israelites once marched full of hope into the promised land (*Hist. of Israel*, II. 249 (II. p. 351),) should become again for them rather a door of hope, like the similar case, Ps. lxxxiv. 7.—Then follow several noble pictures of the consummated happiness, at first vv. 18-22, with reference to the mother-community. Enjoying her pure, true love, she will turn to Him with confidence as to her beloved, legal and equal husband; she will no more turn in unchaste and slavish love to her idols as to her imperious and capricious paramours, since the name *Báal*, i.e. idol, denotes properly *lord*, and may often accordingly denote in the marriage relation the lord or paramour who is slavishly adored and not loved with the pure love of a co-equal as in true marriage, ver. 18, sq. That is a love which authenticates itself on the part of Yahvé in the protection and peace which he alone can give, ver. 20, comp. Job v. 23; Zech. xi. 10. For if his love for his com-

munity comes, it comes for all time, bringing all divine blessings as bridal presents, as it were, with which the marriage is concluded, and bringing inviolable faithfulness, so that the bride must perceive that it is no other than Yahvé who loves her. This is the fair antithesis to vv. 4-15.

4. And, to come back at last, vv. 23-25, to individuals, to those three children, i. 3—ii. 3, the mournful signification of their names is similarly converted into the most joyful signification: *Yizre'el* becomes then indeed a people and land that may be called a *seed of God*; and if a nation can prosper only on condition that the fulness of its harvests corresponds to its desires and labours, and this is possible only when there is a corresponding productiveness of the ground, which again depends on abundant rain as heaven's blessing, which finally must come from Yahvé himself, so everything from above downwards and from below upwards will harmoniously respond by means of Yahvé's love to form a people which shall be a seed of God. But this accord must be in the order in which it is here given, as beginning from above and thus passing down through the whole series, comp. ver. 24 as well as ver. 20 with vv. 10, 14.

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The figure of the *wilderness and desert*, ver. 5, is used to denote nothing more than that they must be deprived of all their temporal blessings and treasures, and become, therefore, as naked as they were at their birth. This idea being the most important, the whole verse should be assigned to it, and the following figure of the mournful end of this woman and her children should be brought into the next verse.—*The gold which they made into Báal*, into a golden Báal, i.e. idol, as in Ex. xxxii. 1-6.

The words at the beginning of the second strophe, ver. 10, are best considered as a question of astonishment at what this thoughtless and forgetful woman said, ver. 7. Is it really the fact, that she does not, or will not, know who her only true

benefactor is? Then she must be treated as is described in ver. 8. In the entire section the language is extremely agitated, and accordingly abounds in the most rapid transitions of all kinds; notwithstanding, every shade of it is correctly chosen.—In the particular instance, ver. 11, it is quite correctly said: *in its season*, in the proper harvest time when the new *corn* has been long looked for (Yôél ii. 23, sq.) and the loss of it is the more distressing, *He will take back* that which he had then as good as given, *and the wool and the flax* which were designed to serve for clothing *He will rescue* as it were from the misuse to which they would be put, taking them away just as they were coming. But these are only privations: much worse things must yet come, actual chastisements, as the discourse, making a new start, goes on to describe, vv. 12-15.

ii. 15. וַתִּצַד is the continuation not of הִקְטִיר but of יָמִי, etc., as a second sentence to this first one: that she went to the Báal feasts *and that she put on* adornment for her lovers; just as הַבְעֵלִים and מֵאֲהָבִים also correspond; comp. a similar instance, vii. 10. Moreover, the more animated discourse does not occur in this entire section, nor indeed from ver. 8 *b*, reflection and argumentation prevailing: the language becomes animated again towards the end of the following strophe as the conclusion approaches.

ii. 17. Following the LXX. we might derive the last verb וַעֲנָה from עָנָה: she will be *humble* as in the time of Moses. But since the restoration of the reciprocal condition of faithfulness is the matter spoken of, the derivation from עָנָה to *answer to, respond*, i.e. to feel no longer aversion, again to live in harmony and love, is more suitable, and although the verb stands somewhat strangely without any object, yet ver. 23, sq. and still more xiv. 9 favour this meaning.

ii. 21, sq. The number *three* having in all such cases a certain sacredness (see *Alterthümer*, p. 177, sq. (151)), the word *betroth* is repeated here also three times.

II. . . . Comp. *supra*, p. 226, *sq.*

### III. CH. III.

Since the foregoing oracle was uttered the immorality and unfaithfulness has, if possible, increased, and refuses to give way; the bond of love and faithfulness has been rent into pieces on the part of the community, which is like an adulteress who has fled from her spouse and husband and wholly gone over to her paramour. The necessity of a more speedy and severe chastisement has therefore been naturally heightened. And yet the prophet receives the command *still to love* such a wife, even if she has run away from him in adultery. At first sight, this is a terribly enigmatical command: for who can find it easy to love a wife who has run away, and devote his love and care to her even against her own will? Certainly ordinary men would think, that in such a case their love had been exhausted and could not again be demanded. Not so the prophet, who had caught glimpses of the inexhaustible nature of the true divine love and its resources. Although deeply grieved at heart, he comprehends what the case requires to meet the demands of the divine will, and receives the fugitive woman again into his house; but he shuts her up in strict and silent imprisonment, away from all society, without either paramour or husband, not from hatred towards her, but from true love to her, to wean her, although it may have to be by compulsion, from her former life, and thus perhaps truly reform her. In the same way, the community, the people of Israel, must be as it were confined for a long time in silent and gloomy sorrow and desolation, in exile, where it will lose all the supports, aids and encouragements of its former immoral and faithless life: the period of reformation, when it will recognise again its true love and hasten to it with joyful trembling, cannot and will not arrive before this punishment has been suffered. All this is again thrown off with extreme brevity and mysteriousness; and the explanations that are intermixed are only of a precursory character and unsatisfactory abruptness.



3.

1 And Yahvé said to me: Once more go love a woman beloved of another and an adulteress | — just as Yahvé loveth the sons of Israel, whilst they turn to other gods and love grape-cakes. ||

Then I bought her to me for fifteen silverlings and a bushel of barley and a fourth-part of barley ; || and said to her: “many days thou shalt remain with me, | shalt not commit adultery nor be another man’s, | —and yet I am kind to thee !” ||

For many days the sons of Israel will remain without king and without prince, | without sacrifice and without statue-idol, | and without priest’s-cope and house-gods ! || Afterwards the sons of Israel will return and seek Yahvé their God and David their king, | and will turn trembling unto Yahvé and to his goodness at the end of the days. ||

1. Certainly Hoséa shall not take a second wife, but he shall *love* one hard to love, an adulteress.—Cakes of grapes, a well-known sweet article of food in wine-growing countries, were never presented as offerings according to the Mosaic law ; but, as appears from this passage and is also of itself very credible, they must have been used in Kanáan as heathen sacrifices, and may thus be considered as a fitting symbol of the sweet seductiveness of heathenism in contrast with the tasteless Mosaic sacrificial loaves, as well as a symbol of sin generally, Prov. ix. 17.

2. The price in gold and additional corn mentioned ver. 2, must at that time have been the customary value of a woman-slave of the lowest class, comp. Ex. xxi. 32. For it would be wholly untrue to imagine that he had bought himself a wife with this sum, inasmuch as the very tone of the language is

quite different from that of i. 2, sq.; nor is an adulterous and fugitive wife to be negotiated for in the same manner as a bride; if the intention is to shut her up and reform her, the most natural course is to buy her as a slave from her paramour into whose power she had fled, and to treat her as a slave. Inasmuch as the pronoun *I bought HER to me*, also points, according to the simple force of the words, not to any runaway adulteress whatsoever, but to one already known, and refers, therefore, to ch. i., the meaning clearly is, that Hoséa bought his own runaway wife as a slave from him into whose power she had thrown herself, this being under the circumstances the simplest method and most suitable for the attainment of the end in view. That she had left him, must have been related between the present chapters ii. and iii. as one may also readily infer from ch. i. alone.

3. ver. 4. The supports and aids of the present condition of the people are for the most part bad of themselves, and are all corrupt, the ancient Israelitish as well as the heathen; *king and prince* must cease in the exile, x. 3; xiii. 10, sq.; *sacrifice*, even the Israelitish one which had been so greatly abused, v. 6, sq.; and the *statue-idol*, a kind of idol-figure, x. 1; Mic. v. 12; much more, lastly, the *priest's-cope*, which had been so much perverted to sinful oracles, and the oraculous heathen house-gods! Judg. xvii; Zech. x. 2; comp. *Alterthümer*, pp. 385, 298, (333, 258). In the last four, therefore, Israelitish and heathen customs are mixed together; and how little all such supports, whether heathen or ancient Israelitish, really avail in the end, is described very similarly in Isa. iii. 1-3.

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*Addendum*, ver. 1. In opposition to the accents and the LXX., עֹד might be connected with וַיֹּאמֶר, on account of the clear antithesis to תַּחֲלֶה, i. 2; however the antithesis is not inevident if we follow the accents, and an additional argument for this construction is the very similar passage, Zech. xi. 15.

*Addendum*, ver. 3. The words וגם אני אליך might be taken, after the analogy of the formula הנני אליך which frequently occurs in Nah. (ii. 14 ; iii. 5), Jer. and Ez., as concluding threat : *and also—I will thee !* if thou shouldst not follow this command ; and the LXX. appear to have taken it thus. Still, the main force of this threatening formula appears to lie less in אל than in הנה ; and the threat would not be so needful for the slave after she was safely locked up. וגם may also express an antithesis, § 354 *a*, and the phrase אני אליך must be interpreted by the equivalent one Jer. xv. 1 ; 2 Kings vi. 11 ; Hag. ii. 17, and to a certain extent by the similar one אני לך, Cant. ii. 16 ; vi. 2 ; it is in reality very suitable that at least a pathetic sign of the love which had only been repressed should at the end gleam forth from this stern language ; after all Hoséa must still love even such a wife, and the result of the chastisement in the matter symbolized, ver. 5, is renewed love. The words allow no other interpretation : comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* IV. iv. p. 45, sq.

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#### THE DISCOURSES—CH. IV.-XIV.

##### I. *The Accusations, general and special*, iv. 1—vi. 11 *a*.

##### 1. *The general Accusation*, ch. iv.

The charge made by God proceeds in four strophes from the most general appeal and consideration : Yahvé is compelled to raise a complaint and contention against all Israelites : 1. on account of infinite immorality, permeating all relationships, against which even the prophets are wholly powerless ; 2. on account of the absence of higher wisdom, which even the corrupt priests, who care only for their own advantage, promote ; 3. on account of the insensate lust, not only of the young, no, but (which is most unpardonable) even of those advanced in life, after all kinds of infatuated and unchaste idol worship ; further,

4. on account of the apparently incurable obstinacy and obduracy, especially of the chiefs, against what is good. Then follows immediately from all these counts and especially from the last, the necessity of the divine anger and the divine punishment, and the accusation is hardly able to control the threat which involuntarily gleams forth from it.

4. 1.

1 Hear Yahvé's word, ye sons of Israel ! for contention hath Yahvé with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no more any faithfulness and no love and no knowledge of God in the land ; || falsely swearing and lying, and murdering and stealing, and committing adultery ! | they break in and murder joins to murder. || Therefore the earth will droop and every one dwelling thereon will wither, unto the beast of the field and the fowls of heaven ; | also the fish of the sea are swept away. || —Only no one shall contend, and reprove shall no one ! | although thy people are as contenders

5 with the priest : || thus thou stumblest to-day, and the prophet also stumbleth with thee in the night, | and I destroy thy mother ! ||

2.

Destroyed are my people from want of knowledge | because *thou* didst reject knowledge, I rejected thee from being priest to me, | and because thou didst forget the doctrine of thy God, I also forget thy sons ! || The more they became the more they sinned against me : | their exaltation I will turn into shame ! || —The sin of my people they devour | and raise their greed for their iniquity : ||

thus then will it be as the people so the priest, | I  
punish upon it its ways, and for its deeds I reward  
10 it ; || then they eat and are not satisfied, commit  
whoredom and do not increase | because they  
ceased to give heed to Yahvé.

## 3.

Whoredom and wine and must take away the  
heart. || My people enquireth of its wood and its staff  
divineth for it, | because the spirit of whoredom hath  
led astray, so that they went a whoring from their  
God. || Upon the mountains' summits they sacrifice,  
and upon the hills burn incense, | under oaks and  
white poplars and terebinths, because their shade  
is so pleasant ; | therefore your daughters commit  
whoredom and your daughters-in-law commit  
adultery :||—I will not lay punishment upon your  
daughters that they commit whoredom, upon your  
daughters-in-law that they commit adultery : | for  
they themselves go with the whores aside, and  
sacrifice with the temple-harlots,—and the undis-  
15 cerning people shall fall ! || If thou committest  
whoredom Israel, yet let not Yuda transgress ! |  
and go not to Gilgal, go not up to *Sin's-house*, and  
swear not by the life of Yahvé ! ||

## 4.

Surely as a stubborn cow Israel hath become  
stubborn : | now shall Yahvé feed them as a lamb  
in a wide pasture ? || Joined-to-idols is Ephraim ; |  
the scandal giveth him restoration ! || Their drinking  
hath degenerated, | her shields commit whoredom  
whoredom, love love shame : || then the wind seizeth

her in its wings, | in order that may be ashamed of  
their sacrifices! ||

1. ver. 2. *They break in* into the houses to rob and to murder, vi. 8; Job xxiv. 16, and immediately thousands fall a prey to them. Verse 3 as Amos viii. 8; ix. 5, only that here the thought that everything living must perish, is carried out at greater length. When the life of man is perverse and the order of nature is violated, creation generally with all that is alive seems to fail, and a universal destruction to be at hand, as Gen. ch. vi -ix.—Great, however, as this dreadful degeneracy is, they will still not permit that anyone, not even a prophet, or a divine voice, should speak to them in the way of contention and correction, although they themselves do not scruple in the least to deal contentiously and quarrelsomely with every one, even with the priest who would teach and admonish them, notwithstanding that this was deemed especially impious and criminal, according to the inherited reverence for the priest of Yahvé, Deut. xvii. 8-13; Eccl. iv. 17, sq. Accordingly the general overthrow is only so much the more certain: if the nation falls to-day, the prophet, who can no longer do anything against such abominations (Amos v. 13), will fall immediately after at night, and finally the *mother*, i.e. the community, with them.

2. Vv. 6-10. The second strophe is closely connected with the end of the first, but it opens with the altered feeling of compassion for the lot of the general masses: truly, my people is destroyed, but the ultimate cause is especially their want of divine knowledge: but precisely because thou, O priest, who art that portion of the nation which was chosen to supply this knowledge, hast wholly neglected it, contrary to thine own mission and dignity, all that external power, number and dignity, which the priests favoured by their position had acquired, will now so much the more quickly promote their downfall!—Vv. 8-10, explain this thought with greater

particularity, the tone of the opening of the strophe recurring. Instead of the teaching and discipline of the priests diminishing the sin of the people, these priests delight to see it increase as much as possible, in order that the numerous penances and sacrifices may satisfy their greed for money, enjoyment, and external honour (comp. as to what is thereby intended, *Altenthümer*, pp. 87, sq. 405, sq. (74, 351)) : it is just the sin of the people which they devour complacently and cheerfully, and for whose guilt they long even greedily. Neither is there, therefore, any stay for the whole nation to be found in them ; no security against destruction ; all must alike fall ; and all in vain are the carnal delights of the priests which are maintained by such means. They gave no heed to Him to whom it is precisely the priest's single duty to give heed, Deut. xxxiii. 9.

3. Vv. 11-15. True, where such low pleasures as those of ver. 10, which can be brought home to even the priests, take possession of and enchain the mind, there is no room for surprise if the unhappy people are seduced by all kinds of idolatry, if they seek insane oracles from their wooden house-gods (as iii. 4), if, having once felt the vile charms of unfaithfulness to the true God, they should be led astray still further, even to the unchaste idol sacrifices under shady trees, where the worship of Astarte publicly allowed and hallowed dissolute dancing and all kinds of licentiousness. —O that, (so closes this strophe in its second half, ver. 14, sq. ; with a twofold wish), first, the uninstructed youth may not be seduced ! These really do not deserve the divine punishment so much as their elders, their fathers, who institute such sacrifices and ceremonies at the instigation of their own lust. And, secondly, O that, if the northern kingdom will not, as it appears, cease from such things, the southern may not fall into this heinous sin ; may its inhabitants not journey into the neighbouring Israelitish places where such idols are worshipped ; and may no one profess externally to serve Yahvé (as both kingdoms, and especially the southern, persisted in doing) if they have really become unfaithful to him in their hearts ! *House-of-Sin*,

ver. 15, instead of Bethel, with the utmost brevity, copied from Amos, v. 5.

4. In fact, the community of the northern kingdom is stubborn towards her true lord, as a degenerated cow that has grown stubborn and apt to toss: and yet is it imagined that Yahvé will feed her in a broad pasture as he would a pet lamb, in accordance with the beautiful imagery of Ps. xxiii., for example?—O, no; not so. On the contrary, Ephraim is wholly allied with dead wooden idols (instead of with Yahvé according to Ex. ch. xix.-xxiv.). What can be done with such folly? The *restoration* or refreshment which Yahvé should give him as a meek lamb, according to Ps. xxiii. 2, is given to him by *the scandal* which was sufficiently described in the previous strophe, the whoredom at the heathen carousals, which is further described in ver. 18; their drinking has degenerated (comp. vii. 5), continually nothing but disgraceful conduct and shameless love on the part of even the *shields*, i.e. the chief princes (Ps. xlvii. 10) of this kingdom, whose duty was to protect it. . . . Therefore, instead of Yahvé feeding it as an innocent sheep in a broad, fair meadow, a driving, overwhelming wind will suddenly clutch it with its wings and hurl it into the wilderness, in order that finally they may depart with shame from such infamous and also useless sacrifices, as described vv. 8-10, 13, sq.—Thus the words of this strophe yield an intelligible meaning: and the evident abruptness of the language might be ascribed to the exhaustion of the close of the discourse. But we must not leave out of sight what was said above pp. 226, sq. The exile might be more plainly pointed out in a 5th verse, and the discourse more generally led back to Israel in a 5th strophe; after that in the first four strophes, (1) the prophet, (2) the priest, (3) the older people, and (4) the princes had been touched upon *seriatim* with more or less detail.

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Since the sentence with וְיִשְׂרָאֵל ver. 4b supplies its own meaning acc. § 341a, there can be no doubt about the sense of the



passage, especially in such a clear context. It is equally clear that in ver. 5 היום and לילה reciprocally correspond in the sense indicated above; and that לילה can be used instead of תלֵּילָה appears from § 277 *b*.

In the second strophe, vv. 6-10, one might be inclined at first sight to ask whether it is only ver. 8, sq. which refers to the priests. It is true that the whole nation ought to be a nation of priests, but this idea is applicable only in such passages as Ex. xix. 4-6, and would be unintelligible in such a connexion as ver. 6 of this chapter; neither, besides, could the priest of ver. 6 be very well another than the priest of ver. 8, sq. It was an inherited belief, and Hoséa expresses it clearly enough here, that the knowledge of divine things is primarily the priest's business, and the want of it amongst the people his fault: there can accordingly be no doubt as to who is emphatically addressed in ver. 6; and the ordinary priests of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes could scarcely at that time be called Yahvé-priests, Hoséa saying as much here in his way. However, if the *eating* ver. 10 refers to ver. 8 and thereby to the priests, ver. 7 must also be considered to refer to them. It cannot, therefore, be denied that this strophe, although it proceeds from the general condition of the nation, treats in its course especially of the priests only; and as a historical fact it is almost the only passage which describes so definitely and at length the priests of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes only. With respect to אֲמַאסָאךְ ver. 6, see §. 247 *e*, and on the change of number in יִשְׂאֵר־נִפְשׁוֹ ver. 8, see §. 319 *a*.

What is said of the *wood* and *staff*, ver. 12 being explained in ver. 13, sq., they are of course intended as merely satirical denominations of the wooden gods; comp. further *Alterthümer*, p. 296, sq. 344, (256, 298); *Hist. of Israel*, IV. 25, sq. (III. 471, sq.)—On הֵם ver. 14=*they themselves*, see §. 314 *a*.

The general meaning of the fourth strophe, vv. 16-19, depends especially upon the words הִנֵּה לוֹ ver. 17. They may mean *leave him!* the construction with לֵּ? having in that case

been preserved from the simple לִי יָנִיחַ acc. §. 295a. The meaning would then be satirical: Let them see how they will get on with this alliance with idols! Still, the discourse in that case would do more than stop short in the middle of the strophe; and Ephraim shall not be left with his idols, as is strongly enough expressed, ver. 19. According to the LXX. (ἐξήκεν ἑαυτῷ σκάνδαλα) a word like מְשֹׁל has dropped out after these two words: and if the vocalisation הִנֵּחַ is then adopted, the meaning given in the text is obtained, this form of the verb with the sense of *to give rest*, i.e. restoration, being still able to retain the construction with לִי. We may then compare מְנַחֵחַ, derived from this very form הִנֵּחַ, in the sense *tranquillisation, refreshing*, Ps. xxiii. 3, and the Syr. *něyāchū* corresponding in meaning to this word. Thus the connexion with ver. 18 is restored; and further, only thus does the sentence ver. 16b as a question, and this question as it is answered by the conclusion, ver. 19, receive its true sense.—The verb כָּוַר ver. 18, meaning *to depart from*, may very well denote the departure of anything from its true character, i.e. *to degenerate*, comp. Jer. ii. 21. On אָהָבוּ הָבֹו see §. 120 a; the repetition expresses here almost satirically an endless continuance; and since this sense is usually expressed by means of the *inf. abs.* the verb, the *inf. abs.* is here exceptionally placed first, הִזְנִיחַ הִזְנִי, for the sake of emphasis, acc. §. 312 c.—Instead of סָר סָבָא the LXX. have ἤρēτισε Καναναίους, *it attached itself in close friendship to the Canaanites*; in which case we should have to read קָרַב קָנָעַן (comp. נִוֶּסֶד), and the sense would not be bad in this connexion, as well as suitable to the words xii. 8, if only כָּנָעַן were not so very unlike the letters סָבָא.

## 2. The special accusation, v. 1—vi. 11 a.

As though in the previous outburst priests and princes had not been sufficiently, because only incidentally, accused, and Yuda

had likewise been insufficiently considered, the renewed and more forcible accusation has from the first an especial regard to the priests and the magnates of the land, reviewing their deeds and plans unsparingly, and also at least during its course referring more to Yuda than in the previous charge. They are charged (1) with vainly wishing in their pride to conceal their many abominations from that Omniscient One who is now their accuser; (2) with vainly endeavouring in their sad transgressions to pacify the anger of the Holy One by means of costly external sacrifices; (3) with vainly and foolishly seeking help from foreigners; (4) with vainly perhaps now and then promising reformation insincerely, merely under the pressure of necessity; because (5) in their lawless life they lacked the really necessary and primary virtues. And throughout the threat of corresponding, inevitable punishment, as the conclusion of such unanswerable charges, struggles at this stage to break forth.

5.

1.

1 Hear this ye priests and attend House of Israel,  
and house of the king hearken! | (for against you  
is the judgment, because ye were a snare for  
Misspah, | and a net spread over Tabor, || and  
backsliding they sinned deeply; | yet I am a cor-  
rection for them all!) ||—I know Ephráim, and  
Israel is not hidden from me, | how thou hast  
now committed adultery Ephráim, Israel is  
defiled; || how they do not cause their deeds to  
turn unto their God, | because the spirit of whore-  
5 doms is in their midst, and they know not Yahvé.||  
Thus then will Israel's pride testify against his  
face, | and Israel and Ephráim will stumble in  
their guilt, also Yuda stumbleth with them.||

## 2.

With their small and their great cattle they go to seek Yahvé, and find him not : | quit is he of them !  
 || to Yahvé they became unfaithful, because they bore strange children : | now will the new-moon devour them with their lands ! ||—Blow the cornet at Gibeá, the trumpet at Rama, | cry aloud in the House-of-sin behind thee O Benyamin : || “Ephráim will become a wilderness on the day of punishment ! | among the tribes of Israel I have proclaimed what is true.” || “Yuda’s princes have become like removers of boundaries : | upon them will I pour my wrath like water !” ||

## 3.

Oppressed is Ephráim, judgment broken, | because of his own will he followed the Post : || whilst I am as the moth unto Ephráim | and as worm-eatenness unto Yuda’s house. || Then Ephráim saw his sickness and Yuda his wound, and Ephráim went to the Assyrian and sent to the warlike king | — yet he will not be able to heal you, nor alleviate for you the wound ; || for I am as a lion unto Ephráim, as a young lion unto Yuda’s house, | I rend and depart, take away without any deliverer, ||  
 15 will go back to my place, until that they suffer and seek my face : | in their need, they will seek for me ! ||

## 6.

## 4.

1 “Come let us return unto Yahvé, | for he rent so he may heal us, smote so he may bind us up, || make us alive again after two days, | on the third

day raise us up, that we may live before him, || that we may know, endeavour to know Yahvé as the dawn of certain rising, | that he may come as the rain to us, as the latter rain refresh the earth!" ||—  
 5 What shall I do unto thee Ephraïm, what do to thee Yuda, | since your favour is as the morning-cloud, and as the early vanishing dew! || Therefore I hew by the prophets, slay them by the words of my mouth, | and my judgment will arise as the light.||

## 5.

For I take pleasure in love not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offering: || but they are as men who transgressed the covenant; | there they became unfaithful to me! || Gilead is a city of evil-doers, | tracked with blood: || and as constables lie in wait, a band of priests slayeth  
 10 along the way to Sikhém; yea they committed abomination! || In the house of Israel I saw a horrible thing: | there Ephraim hath whoredom, Israel is defiled; || also for thee Yuda—hath it grafted a Branch!

1. In the address ver. 1, sq., much as in 'Amôs iii. 1. sq., a good deal that is *a propos* is at once introduced into a long parenthesis: it is especially the magnates whom this trial, which is now to be opened, concerns, and primarily, therefore, the accusation; you shall now be judged, because you were not, as you should have been, protectors and maintainers of the land, but insidious plotters and despoilers of it, like snares and nets; since, however, nets for catching birds are often set upon elevated spots, here, instead of the land, high places are named

(denoting nevertheless the idea of the whole northern country), on that side of the Yordan a Misspah, comp. vi. 8, having an elevated situation, and on this side Tabor. And, as in explanation of the bold figure, ver. 2, there is added, the language falling into the third person: *and* because backsliders, *i.e.* godless persons, *acted deeply corrupted*; yet, concludes the preface, however deeply they have transgressed, *I am and continue a correction for them all*, being able to correct them all any moment as they deserve and as is done, *e.g.* in this reprimand, comp. ver. 12.—With this all that has to be said, especially in the first strophe, has been fully enough introduced, vv. 3-5; ver. 3 refers back briefly to iv. 6, 12, 18; with ver. 4 *a*, comp. vii. 2; ver. 5 *a* like vii. 10; Job xvi. 8; the phrase both here and vii. 10 points to the great judgment of the future, as Isa. iii. 9 similarly.

2. Vv. 6-10. True, these northern Israelites are anxious to anticipate the uneasy feeling of their guilt by rich sacrifices; but he to whom they became unfaithful by the worship described in iv. 13, and by an un-Israelitish youth which had grown up in this worship and had not been acknowledged by Yahvé as his, was released from this covenant with them, and instead of beholding their offerings, will have them destroyed together with their fields by the next new moon (according to the ancient belief that the change of the moon had either a beneficial or harmful influence upon the fruits of the fields and thereby upon men, comp. Virg. Georg. i. 427, sq.) And already is heard the report of the divine punishment spreading rapidly like a note of alarm (comp. viii. 1; Am. iii. 6) even to the northern kingdom, from Gibeá and Rama north of Jerusalem but still in the tribe of Benjamin, Isa. x. 29, as far as Bethel outside of this tribe, the head-quarters of the sin of Ephráim; and it is only too true what this celestial messenger of evil tidings proclaims (ver. 9 is quite like the proclamation of an authoritative herald, with an important conclusion). A similar threat is heard against Yuda, which displaces all justice and

thereby as it were all boundaries, ver. 10, whereas the ancient Law punished none more severely than the removers of boundaries (comp. *Alterth.* p. 249 (213)).

3. Yea (the third strophe being thus closely connected with the end of the second), whilst the internal evils, wasting the nation slowly but surely, which had their origin in the defeat of justice, and more distantly and truly in the dastardly resolve of the nation to follow, instead of the divine word, the miserable *post*, i.e. the image of a god set up like a post or pole (comp. iv. 12; Am. v. 26)—while such evils make themselves felt painfully enough, the two kingdoms, it is true, are thinking about the means of getting rid of their troubles, but inasmuch as they do not or will not comprehend the real source of their internal corruption, namely, that salvation and justice the moment they are received are the life of a people, but the moment they are rejected are the corruption and death of a people, they go in search of wholly false remedies, Ephraïm bringing the Assyrian to the rescue. Not only is no true help to be found in such a way, but the internal derangement must increase, Yahvé must become more and more angry and finally withdraw into heaven from this decayed and corrupt body, that they may be reduced to the necessity of seeking him there.

4. It has indeed at this stage occurred to them occasionally, just as they are accustomed to present offerings to Yahvé, v. 6, to also utter before him some words of assumed repentance, vi. 1-3, comp. viii. 2; although the tone of their supplication betrays but little true penitence, since they suggest to him the healing of their wounds as soon as possible simply because he inflicted them, with the all but taunting conclusion, that then they would acknowledge, or rather merely strive to acknowledge, that Yahvé is like the dawn, the coming of which is sure and certain, the light which is never looked for in vain.—But such half promises, given in the perplexity of the moment, do not satisfy Yahvé, because the love they promise is as passing as the morning-cloud in the climate of Palestine and as the

dew: accordingly he utters only the more his threatenings by the prophets (xii. 11), which are never without decisive practical effect, and which will soon be followed, as if to demonstrate their truth, by the judgment of noon-day clearness.

5. In the final strophe, in which the language becomes again exceedingly abrupt, the Northern kingdom is referred to in the second member of ver. 7 and similarly of ver. 10 by the particle *there* as the kingdom which after all is the main subject intended, the chief seat of the abominations, of which immediately, ver. 8, sq., two important examples are supplied, one of which, just as in the first words of the charge, v. 1, extends to the land on the other side of Yordan, and the other to the land on this side. *Gilead*, elsewhere an extensive district, must in this connexion manifestly denote the capital, therefore, probably Misspah, v. 1, since it is observable in this strophe generally that it recurs to many of the thoughts of the first. Near *Sikhém*, a city of refuge and of priests (comp. *Alterthümer*, pp. 229, sq. 502 (196, 425)), many priests, according to this charge, murdered the refugees before they could reach their asylum, perhaps at the command of the magnates of their party who disliked such innocent fugitives; and thus priests discharged the duties of constables. How shocking is the whole state of things thus generally, ver. 10. Only a brief word as to Yuda, as seduced by example into similar sins, ver. 11 a, comp. iv. 15.

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That the words שחטה סטים העמיקו v. 3 cannot be taken otherwise, appears clearly from ix. 9 and Ps. ci. 3: שחטה is accordingly only another orthography for שִׁחָתָה, and this must be *inf. Piel*, acc. § 238 d.; the combination הָעִמִּיק שִׁחָתָה is the same as שִׁחָתָה ix. 9, acc. § 285 a. b.

The words *behind thee, O Benjamin!* ver. 8, have accidentally a similar sound to Judg. v. 14, but the connexion is in this passage somewhat different; and that Hoséa speaks from Yuda looking northwards appears also from the word *there*, i.e.



in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, in this same discourse, vi. 7, 10.

הוֹאִיל הַלֵּךְ ver. 11 is acc. § 285 *b*, *he resolved went*, i.e. went from his own will and resolve. In the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* vii. p. 47 is shown at length that צֵי means a log of wood, or a post, and in this passage is a derisive name for the wooden god.

As to the name the *warlike king*, ver. 13, for the Assyrian king, see *History of Is.* IV. 152 (III. p. 641).—The word אֲדָה corresponds to *aghā* of the *Hexapla*, Job vii. 9.

On יָה instead of יֵהָ vi. 1, comp. § 233 *a*; the relation of פְּשָׁחֵר vi. 3 to לְדַעַת is explained § 284 *b*.—The sense of the first two members of vi. 5 can in this connection be no other than that given above. Instead of מִשְׁפָּטִי אִוֵּר the reading must be מִשְׁפָּטִי כְּאוֹר, as all the ancient versions except the Vulgate have it, which agrees better with this verse and forms a better contrast to ver. 3, and compared with such passages as x. 4 can be the only correct one; the *judgment* is accordingly, being that of God, the *punishment* at the same time.

Were we to understand by the word אָדָם vi. 7 Adam, according to the narrative Gen. ch. iii, the following נָשָׁם might then be referred to that time, as though here and x. 9 the meaning were, that *there* even in that early age this kingdom of Israel existed as it were, as if one and the same thread of spiritual nature had been drawn from there to this generation. But if this thought were supposed to occur to Hoséa, it would at least be necessary to have here פְּרִירָתִי as in viii. 1, that the reader might comprehend what covenant they transgressed as Adam had done; אָדָם must evidently be understood with the same generality as בְּרִית; and that they are merely compared here, with less brevity than viii. 1, to covenant-breaking men, arises simply from the fact that this covenant is primarily of a purely spiritual kind, which is neither transgressed so palpably nor is exposed to such material punishments as a civil covenant. Neither in Job xxxi. 33 is it necessary to understand Adam; and the particle *there* is manifestly, as in ver. 10, intended here

to refer to the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, as is immediately explained, ver. 8, sq.

The word עֵקֶב vi. 8, where, as in Isa. xl. 4, a land is intended, can denote one that is full of, or uneven with, *heels*, i.e. crooked elevations: but in this connexion that is an inappropriate sense; neither is the idea that it means a *heap* (or rather a pool) of *blood* demonstrable or applicable. Here it can only mean *tracked with*, and had then better be pronounced as a pure passive, עֵקְבָה.—On the orthography עֵקֶב vi. 9 see § 238 e.—עֵקֶב nowhere occurs in Hoséa as *harvest*: but if it had been used by him in this sense, it would not at all suit this connexion. Here it can only mean *branch*, as Job xiv. 9; xviii. 16; xxix. 19; and this branch, which has been grafted on Yuda also, can only be a branch of that impurity mentioned above in ver. 10.

## II. THE PUNISHMENT, VI. 11 b—IX. 9.

But it would be an endless task to enumerate all the complaints and charges against Israel: however they may deny them, they are really innumerable, and when the great chastisement of the Northern kingdom comes at the approaching decision and denial will be of no more use, they will all come to light. With this turn of events the tone of the language changes: it is already certain that the punishment needful for the healing of such great defects is coming; the thought is therefore confined entirely to this darkest part of the future, the terrible picture of the necessary destruction of the existing kingdom filling the prophet's soul, his very language becoming here burdened with his grief. And because this punishment must primarily and most surely soon fall upon the Northern kingdom, the mournful review confines itself more closely than has been the case before to this kingdom alone, viii. 14, in other respects remarkable, forming the only exception to this. In this manner each of the five long strophes

generally presents at the commencement the certainty and the necessity of the great chastisement: but inasmuch as the further consideration of this certainty, which has hitherto been simply the subjective certainty of the prophet himself, always leads up to the various causes of divine chastisement, there occurs here again incidentally a review of all their sins, but justly in such a way that the starting point is made from the condition of the people, in other words, the *kingdom*. Whilst therefore the first strophe describes the internal, the second the external short-comings of the government, the third going historically further back to the commencement of the idol-worship and the other rotten foundations of the existing kingdom, the fourth showing how these were only increased by the most recent events, the fifth, looking at the still existing delight in idolatry, finally prophesies the near and lamentable end of this insane jubilation, and of this first and last profound corruption itself.

7.

1.

- 1      When I turn the fortunes of my people, when I  
 heal Israel: | then will be manifest Ephraim's guilt  
 and Samaria's wickednesses, | how they used deceit,  
 and the thief cometh in, the constables plunder  
 the street. || And say they not to their heart, I  
 remembered all their wickedness? now have their  
 deeds surrounded them, before my face have they  
 come! || With their wickedness they delight the  
 king, | and with their faithlessnesses the princes; ||  
 all are adulterers like an oven heated by a baker |  
 who resteth from heating between the kneading of  
 5 the dough and its fermenting. || On our king's-day  
 the princes have a fever-heat from wine, | he ex-  
 changeth his hand with mockers. || Yea almost like

the oven have they made their heart in their intrigue: | all night slept their baker, in the morning it burneth as a blazing fire, || all glow as the oven and devour their judges! | All their kings are fallen, not one among them calling upon me! ||

## 2.

Ephraïm—among the nations he groweth old; || Ephraïm became a hearth-cake not turned; || strangers devoured his strength—he knoweth of nothing, | also grey hair is sprinkled upon him—he  
 10 knoweth of nothing. || Thus will then Israel's pride witness against his face | and that they returned not to Yahvé their God, and sought him not after all this. ||—But Ephraïm became like a silly senseless dove, | Egypt they called, after Assyria went they: || the more they go, I spread over them my net, bring them down as the birds of heaven, | chastise them according to the announcement to their community! || woe to them that they fled from me, calamity to them that they became unfaithful to me! |—And *I* will still redeem them: yet *they* spoke lies against me, || and cried not to me in their heart, but bewail upon their couches, | on account of corn and must they excite themselves, fall away from me! || And *I* strung yea strengthened  
 15 their arms: | yet against me they imagine evil: || turn themselves—but not upwards, become like a slack bow. | By the sword shall their princes fall for the venom of their tongue: that is their scorn with the land of Egypt!

8. 3.

- 1 To thy mouth the trumpet: “as an eagle over Yahvé’s house!” | because they have transgressed my covenant, rebelled against my teaching. || To me they cry “my God we know thee we Israel !” || “Israel hath despised the good; | let the enemy pursue it!” || They set up kings—but not from me, princes and I knew them not, | made their silver and gold into gods for themselves—in order  
5 that it may be destroyed! || He hath despised thy calf O Samaria! enkindled is my anger against them; | how long—then they will not any longer be able to clear themselves! || For from Israel is that also, it was made by an artist and is no god: | yea Samaria’s calf will become chips! ||—Wind they sow truly and storm will they reap; | stalk it hath not, a *sprout* which doth not grow a *shoot*, | if it grew it, foreigners devour it. ||

4.

- Israel is swallowed up! | now they have become even among the nations as an unpleasant vessel ! || —because they there went up after Assyria like a wild ass separating itself, | Ephraïm hired loves; ||  
10 (should they hire them among the nations, now will I gather them, that they may cease a little from the tribute to the king of the princes!) ||—because Ephraïm increased altars to sin, | it received altars to sin; || (I write for him by myriads my doctrines: | as something strange they are esteemed; || raw sacrifices they sacrifice as flesh and eat, Yahvé

accepteth them not! | now will he remember their guilt visit their iniquity, they shall return to Egypt!) ||—*And Israel forgot his maker and built palaces,—and Yuda multiplied defenced cities: | accordingly I send fire into his cities, which may devour his citadels. ||*

9.

5.

- 1 Rejoice not Israel too greatly like the heathen, that thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, | hast loved harlots-hire upon every cornfloor! || Floor and press will not satisfy them, | and the must will deceive them; || they will not dwell in Yahvé's land, | but Ephraïm will return to Egypt, in Assyria they will eat unclean things; || they will not pour wine to Yahvé, nor will their offerings be palatable to him, | like bread of mourning they are to them, of which all who eat defile themselves; | but their bread is for their belly, cometh not into
- 5 Yahvé's house! || what will ye do on the feast-day, | and on the day of Yahvé's festival? ||—Yea if they are gone from the ruins, Egypt will gather them Memphis bury them; | desire for their silver—the thistle will succeed them, the nettles in their tents! || Arrived are the days of punishment, arrived the days of recompense, feel it will Israel! | mad is the prophet, raving the inspired (man), | because thy guilt is so great, and so great the insidiousness; || a spy is Ephraïm against my God, | the prophet—the fowler's net is upon all his ways, insidiousness in the house of his God! || Deeply they sinned as

once at Gibeá: | he will remember their guilt, visit their transgressions!

1. vii. 1, sq. The phrase “to turn the fortunes of Israel,” was from the time of Yôél, iv. 1, sq., a standing designation of the period of the great decision, when everything that has been hidden or concealed and denied will come to light, in order that recovery and the desired, true, complete salvation may appear; accordingly the conclusion of ch. vi. belongs to ch. vii. 1, without which the structure of the verse would not be finished, whilst the words in the common connexion supply no sense. How foolish is therefore their whole conduct! Will they really, whilst they commit every possible transgression (comp. the similar opening, iv. 2), not at all consider that no iniquity is lost before the eternal avenger Yahvé? By such thoughtlessness their crimes have only grown the faster, which surround them as so many witnesses before whom not one has escaped (*Sura* 2. 75 or 81) and stand at the same time equally clear before me calling for vengeance.—Thus having arrived at the midst of the description of their many grievous transgressions, the punishment of which is now to be announced, the discourse now begins, vv. 3-7, to designate the chief internal short-coming of the kingdom, which belongs to this strophe, viz. the entirely perverse understanding between the government and the subject. On the one hand, the subjects do not scruple to aid and abet the princes in all abominations, so that a general demoralisation prevails, all are constantly blazing with passion and infamy like an oven; and as the baker rests from heating no longer than he is compelled, that is, during the few hours of the night which pass between the kneading of the dough and its fermentation, (comp. ver. 6; Ex. xii. 34-39), so they rest from inflaming their burning passions no longer than is necessary for the acquirement of new powers, their whole business being the perpetual support of their passions. On the other hand, vv. 5-7, the princes are not any better than the rest of the subjects, they drink, *e.g.* on the annual celebra-

tion of the king's birthday until they get a *sick*, *i.e.* incurable (Mic. i. 9 ; ii. 10) or fever-heat, and even the king exchanges intimacy with mockers, with men already totally corrupt ; but in fact behind this intimacy and fever-heat of the banquet there is hidden nothing but new plotting on the part of those who wish to kill the king and seize the opportunity of advancing their own interests, and suddenly that oven (to come back to this figure) stands open in full blaze with this passion also ; they keep quiet as long as is needful for the success of their treachery, *all night their baker*, that is their passion *sleeps*, but in the morning, as the baker's oven, so their heart appears suddenly in full blaze, heated with passion, to murder the king. This is the career of such kings and such princes (*i.e.* officers of state) and subjects : and thus have all their kings fallen by assassination—whilst nevertheless not one among them seeks the true salvation (as was said before, ver. 2).

2. If one turns from the internal abominations of the kingdom of this kind to its external relations, there is nothing to be seen of a consolatory nature, as is briefly said vv. 8-10. In comparison with others, the kingdom becomes gradually weaker and the prey of foreigners, as if it had already grown old and were entering upon its last period ; or as if it were a thin unturned hearth-cake, which must soon be burnt at the fire. But notwithstanding all this, the kingdom is too thoughtless and arrogant to pay attention to evident short-comings of this kind and to remember the true means of salvation, Isa. i. 3 ; ix. 8, sq. ; therefore this impenitent arrogancy will supply a witness against their own face (as is repeated also v. 5) !—And in order to specify more particularly the guilt of the kingdom in this respect, it is this infatuated seeking for help from other nations, as if it were a foolish dove which has lost its proper home and resting-place and therefore flutters about hither and thither. But they do not consider that they are really only on the flight from their true Lord and Redeemer,—from Yahvé who as Lord is able in a moment to prevent and chastise every such foolish attempt, who can cast his net over the wandering dove, the



more it strays and bring it down, therein only exercising that chastisement which he had long ago declared to the community by a well-known oracle,—from Yahvé who as their everlasting Redeemer is always prepared to redeem them (as is here only quite briefly indicated, but is explained at length subsequently, xiii. 14, sq.; xi. 8-11), whilst they in their ingratitude as soon as ever a calamity befalls them, as soon as they believe they have not enough corn and must (ii. 11; Am. iv. 9), sink embittered into melancholy trouble and lamentation, become, *ipso facto*, unfaithful to the true God, yea, take up lies against him (*e.g.* when they charge him with weakness),—from Yahvé who in ancient times made their arms strong and sinewy against their enemies, whilst they imagine evil (*e.g.* in their alliance with Egypt and Assyria,) against him and turn themselves (shift, change,) it is true, but certainly not upwards (xi. 7) to what is good and salvation, but, on the contrary, hang irresolutely to the earth like a relaxed bow which cannot be strung and used (see on Ps. lxxviii. 57), accordingly their princes (who are most zealous in their evil flight from Yahvé) shall fall precisely by the false means which they call to their aid in scorn of Yahvé, by the sword of the Assyrians, in order that this trust in foreigners to the contempt of Yahvé may appear in its true light!

3. viii. 1-3. Yes (thus the discourse rises with new vigour after its exhaustion), proclaim (thou herald, whoever thou art,) immediately the alarming news (v. 8, sq.), that the enemy (that Assyrian whom ye have wished to call in with such infatuation, as was said in the second strophe) is rapidly coming like an eagle over Yahvé's house, to destroy this chief temple in Samaria, ix. 4, and therewith the whole kingdom! It is true they will then in their distress, alarmed by such a dreadful announcement, call upon Yahvé as upon one who *must* (as they think) protect his people (in the same way as above, vi. 1-3); but the reply will be, the enemy may pursue them without hindrance, since they had cast away the true good.—For, taking a serious

glance at the origin and foundation of this kingdom, vv. 4-6, it is well known that it sprang from a confused opposition to the rule of the house of David, associated with a hankering for a sensuous idol-worship, and that the new kings of the separated kingdom were very soon unable to maintain their power in opposition to Yuda save by the promotion of this sensuous cultus, by the transformation of the invisible and spiritual Yahvé into the image of a calf (see *Hist. of Israel*, IV. p. 26, sq. (III. p. 470, sq.)). Such, however, are but rotten foundations, a frivolous origin; the gold appears to have been made into a golden god only in order to be the more surely destroyed by the enemies, the elaborate image of the false god they worship appears to serve no other purpose than to be broken into shivers at the approaching conquest, and the righteous punishment which is coming from the true God, who is angry with such follies, will very quickly annihilate (as was said more briefly, vv. 2, 3) all their excuses with which they think to wash themselves pure, since it cannot be denied that this calf also, worshipped by them as God, is really their own human handiwork (as will be further explained xiii. 2), and inasmuch as they *loathe* the good, ver. 3, so Yahvé must *loathe* this calf, ver. 5.—But thereby, ver. 7, they are only brought back to the general truth, that the end of all human efforts corresponds to their commencement, as the fruit to its germ; if the germ and sprout is empty and abortive, how in that case can a fruitful harvest, a real gain, arise? But suppose even, the strophe concludes recurring to its opening, that there were something good to appear, barbarians would devour it, as has been said already.

4. It appears certain, the fourth strophe continues, ver. 8, Israel as a nation must be as good as devoured or annihilated, as was just said, if again, instead of looking at those historical facts connected with the origin of the nation, we turn to the other resources which have been used in recent times to maintain the government. To them belongs (1) ver. 9, sq. the help

so dearly purchased (xii. 2) from Assyria, whither Ephraïm went, without the permission of his lord, like a single, separatist, obstinate wild-ass (Gen. xvi. 12), in order to hire in return for weighty presents in reality nothing but—dalliance, *i.e.* intercourse with the Assyrian gods and unfaithfulness to Yahvé. But how unwise! Just because it is preposterous, the true God must prevent it: even if they hire those amongst the heathen who shall help them, now will I gather them on the contrary, bringing them together to one spot in close captivity (ix. 6; iii. 4), that they may no more be able to run about so wildly hither and thither seeking help, especially with the object that they may wait awhile before paying this shameful tribute to the king of the princes, *i.e.* the Assyrian Great-king! In the second strophe the alliances were already remarked upon.—(2) Vv. 11-13, the growing multiplication of wholly foreign religions and of savage customs connected therewith, *e.g.* the custom of eating raw flesh of sacrifices, contrary to Ex. xii. 9, with complete disparagement of the genuine Israelitish, Mosaic laws, which at that time had been very generally committed to writing,—with respect to which transgressions Yahvé threatens in anger to send them back again into slavery in Egypt! ix. 3; xi. 5; ii. 16. The threat *they shall go back to Egypt*, is the strongest that could be uttered by a prophet of those moderately ancient times; and we must translate ourselves into the primitive and most deeply rooted national feelings of Israel to feel this properly, comp. Deut. xvii. 16, and *Hist. of Israel*, IV. p. 221, sq. (III. p. 735, sq.)—(3) Ver. 14, the vain confidence in great edifices, especially fortresses, Mic. v. 10. But this verse is in many respects remarkable. The language does not sound like Hoséa's, but very much like 'Amô's's: the mention of Yuda is here unexpected; the connexion is loose, the expansion which Hoséa elsewhere uses is wanting. It is true the verse is required by the structure of the strophe, but it seems clear that Hoséa quotes it from a lost book of 'Amô's's.

5. ix. 1-5. Certainly, the Northern kingdom continues to perform the various newly introduced heathen sacrifices mentioned in the previous strophe viii. 11-13, with loud rejoicing, and presents to the heathen gods infatuated gifts, *e.g.* the tithe (comp. ii. 10-15, 'Amôs iv. 4), in harvest time at every corn-floor; but let it not rejoice too greatly over this, it being really unfaithfulness to Yahvé, nor over these gifts, which are properly speaking harlot's reward, reward to gain the favour of those false lords, the paramours, ii. 7-15! This luxurious life can easily become a dreary silence, as a punishment from Yahvé the true lord! The land may become unfruitful, so that the cornfloor and the winepress will not *feed*, *i.e.* satisfy them, and the must deceive *them* in their expectations, Joel i. 12; Hab. iii. 17; comp. above ii. 11; but the exile will be sent also to drive them entirely out of the beautiful land of Yahvé, ii. 14, into an unclean land (Am. vii. 17), where, however much they may desire it, they will no more be able to celebrate their ancient customary sacrifices to Yahvé, because the temple and the entire sacred institution will be wanting. That will be a melancholy meal, therefore, like a funeral meal, which was at the same time polluting (comp. *Alterthümer*, p. 203, sq. (174)), the time when the meal cannot be first consecrated and hallowed that it may then be eaten at the feast with twofold pleasure, but merely fills the belly without consecration or blessing! In what distress will they then come at the approach of a Yahvé-festival! A very important passage for obtaining a just idea of the feeling of the ancients with respect to sacrifices.—Yes, is the conclusion of this and the previous strophes, vv. 6-9, the final and extreme punishment must come, those also who have fled from the desolation of their country must nevertheless fall in strange lands, looking back with vain longing for the treasures of their degenerate home. Israel must be made to feel since they will not hear, since they suffer the prophet who will admonish them rather to fall into madness even than hear his admonition, when pursued by their hatred and machinations

he became enraged even in the Temple. But acting thus, as murderous liers-in-wait (vi. 8; v. 1), they really lie in wait for God in the prophet, they will not hear the spirit, the most grievous crime, as grievous as that formerly at Gibeon, Judg. ch. xix. In such a case how is help possible? Thus this gloomy section ends with the most gloomy picture, in the most intense agitation; as if the prophet had contended up to this point against touching upon personal wrongs and perils, and now at the end had been compelled by the force of these grievous matters not entirely to pass over those most painful experiences in his own life and this most evident proof of the profound perversity of Israel.

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Instead of פִּרְקָאִי, vii. 1, the LXX. read בִּיר, whereby the correspondence with the previous member is completely restored. This momentous commencement with the double reference to the final crisis of two contrasted states, which had been previously announced by earlier prophets, denotes of itself clearly enough a new discourse for the purpose of passing the sentence; and the briefly particularized transgressions, ver. 1, at once remind the hearer of the commencement of the charge, iv. 1, but a call to hear, as in iv. 1; v. 1, is justly absent here, because the complaint has no longer to be heard but the final decision itself; in this case the judge himself speaks forthwith. That פֶּשַׁע בַּחוּץ must denote open *plunder* in contrast to בֹּרֵא, the secret entrance of a house, is taught by the whole context also. The strange translation of the LXX. of the first words, vii. 2, which ran probably ὡς συνάδοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν suggests some such reading as פָּמוּ יִאֲדָרֵי בְּלִבָּם, as if they agreed in their hearts: whereto God would then say, *I remember all their wickedness!* But the present Hebrew reading gives a much more animated sense if the sentence is taken as interrogative, and the second sentence is subordinated to it, acc. § 338a.

The simple meaning of the rare figure, vii. 4, is clear (comp. *Sura*, xi. 41); their passion is the baker who heats them as an oven; it is only the lengthened continuation of the figure that is peculiar; but it soon recurs again with another application, ver. 6, sq. On *בַּעֲרָה*, ver. 4, see § 173 *h*, note: *תַּעֲרִיר* occurs here nowhere as masculine, since *יִשְׁבֹּרֶת* must be referred to the baker, and acc. § 298 *b* is construed with the *part.* *מַעֲרִיר*, which denotes *to heat*, comp. *עִיר* *heat, anger*, xi. 9. The figure of heat extends essentially through ver. 5 also, where the ancients took *תִּהְיֶה לִּי* incorrectly for *תִּהְיֶה לִּי*, *they began* and thereby lost the idea of the *sick*, i.e. unwholesome heat. The leading figure of an oven is then suitably restored again with fresh vigour, ver. 6, with the words *לְהֵרֵב כִּי*, *to bring near like*, i.e. to make nearly like . . . ., comp. *עִיר*, Nah. i. 10. To understand the whole force of this description, vii. 5-7, it is especially needful to know what class of people were then called *mockers*, comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, II. p. 12, 2nd Ed.—The *king's day*, ver. 5, was either the birth-day of the king (comp. Ps. xxi. and *Dichter des A.Bs.* I b. p. 86), or the anniversary of his accession: the expression in either case supposes that this festival had then been long since introduced into the Northern kingdom.

It is without ground that *הַתְּבוּלָה*, vii. 8, which occurs nowhere else, is supposed in accordance with the LXX. to mean *to mix oneself*, which does not suit the context. It is best to derive it from *נָבַל*=*נָבַל*, meaning what is *withered* and *old*, the same idea recurring again, viii. 8, at the beginning of the corresponding fourth strophe, under another figure. On the construction of ver. 10, comp. ii. 15 above.

In this connexion *כַּאֲשֶׁר* vii. 12 can only mean as in iv. 7 *the more* (. . . the more) (acc. § 360 *b*, comp. Syr. *hōkan*—*kēmō*, Lagarde's *anal. syr.* p. v. 12), the simple meaning *when* affording no sense here; for they have already gone away once, but the more they do it the more surely will He suddenly punish them according to their deserts. This is indicated here with

so much brevity precisely because in an *oracle* (שְׁמַע the same as שְׁמוּעָה, see p. 143) which was then without doubt well-known, addressed to the community by an earlier prophet, it had been declared how severely the calling in of foreigners must work its own punishment; so that here (as in Isa. iii. 10, sq.) only a brief cry of woe over this sin is added, ver. 13 a. But after ver. 13 a the verse must be separated.

Instead of הִתְגִּירָה vii. 14, the LXX. read ἡתְגִירָה (*Alterthümer*, p. 219 (188) ) ; since in this place that would be too strong, it is better to derive the word from גִּיר, used above, which has the same ultimate radical meaning as עִיר to set fire to, to stoke, to be zealous, and at all events occurs in the poets, Ps. cxl. 3 ; lvi. 7, lix. 3. The construction of the following סָר to depart from, i.e. to fall away, become faithless, Deut.<sup>9</sup> xi. 16, with בִּי to anyone, is very rare, although not difficult to conceive : but probably it stands for יִסְרֶי acc. § 160 a, on account of the related words iv. 16, and in that case corresponds to מָרָה with בִּי xiv. 1.

יָסַר vii. 15, as radically connected with יָתַר (יָתֵר cor'd), means to string, render strong and powerful ; the meaning right (straight) is connected with it, whence יָסַר to correct.

The eagle denotes, viii. 1, primarily only the swiftness of their approach, but there is also plainly enough an allusion to the standard of the Assyrians, which descended from them to the Persians, and which at the time when Hoséa wrote might be sufficiently well known in the Northern kingdom.

The sentence viii. 2 may be best taken as a short question of astonishment : if they really cry thus (which is surprising enough considering how they have behaved, but they will do it), then he will answer them ver. 3 ; and since יָנַח signifies originally an offensive smell, it has thence the derived meaning of the corresponding disgust and contempt, giving rise to the paronomasia between ver. 3 and ver. 5.—Precisely because in this strophe, ver. 2, so much stress is laid upon their flattering themselves that they are in the constant enjoyment of the

favour of God and persist in considering themselves just and innocent, it is best to take נָקִי (inf. acc. §. 239a) in its primary meaning of *being pure* according to their own idea, or of clearing, exculpating onself. That *how long? then they will . . .* has the force of *very soon* they will be no more able to exculpate themselves (because the punishment overtakes them), needs scarcely be said. For, proceeds ver. 6, they are unable even to clear themselves of worshipping Yahvé under the form of an image: they must know that *also this image is from Israel* and not from God, still less God himself: on the contrary it must *become shivers* that their superstitious feeling for it may be destroyed. For שָׂרָפִים cannot here very well signify *flames*, as שְׂבִיבִים Job xviii. 5, inasmuch as a golden image would hardly be burnt; it is best to compare the word with Arab. *sebībah*, *slice, little piece*, in case there is no mention for some special object as in Exod. xxxii. 20 of *atoms of dust*.

זָרַח, viii. 7, in this connection naturally suggests the meaning, it is *a shoot* (they sow) *which does not put forth buds*, or as the paronomasia in Hebrew implies, *does not produce meal*.

The emphatic reference to the people of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes in הָקָמָה is to be understood in the same way as the frequent references thither, which have been explained, vi. 7, 10.—In this connexion, ver. 13 must form a parenthesis, the commencement of which גַּם כִּי is explained §. 362 b. Since מַשָּׂא acc. to Am. v. 11; 2 Chr. xvii. 11, signifies the *tribute* paid for the protection of a Superior, it is better to read וַיִּחַלְוּ; *that they wait or desist from the tribute to the Assyrian king*, to present this, instead of וַיִּחַלְוּ; and only in banter is added *desist a little*, as if compassionating them that they had already presented too much and had too much trouble with it.

The repetition of the thought in almost the same words in two members, viii. 11, is the more telling the further the speaker looks back in the past upon the long series of their innumerable altars, acc. §. 313a. *Then became to him altars*, they acquired them from the commencement of the Northern



kingdom.—On the *K'thīb* תִּרְחִיב ver. 12 and its signification see §. 287*k*; and on the important historical meaning which lies in these words, comp. *Hist of Israel*, I. 84 (I. 125, sq.).

The word תִּבְהִי viii. 13, formed from תִּבְהָב acc. § 164 *c*, must signify *what is of araw nature*, or more briefly *what is raw*, and in particular *raw flesh*. It cannot be doubted that תִּבְהָב means this in Chaldee; also Arab. *habba* and *habhab* convey the idea of what is fresh; related thereto is Syr. *ebbō*, *fresh fruit*, and תִּבְ, Job viii. 12, also *habbēb*, *to bloom*. As to the custom of sacrificing and eating raw flesh, comp. *Alterth.* p. 52 (42), and below on Zach. ix. 6.

The feminine תִּבְ ix. 2, would have to be referred to the faithless *community*: but neither in the immediate context nor in this whole strophe, ix. 1-9, does the prophet speak of this in the feminine; indeed, it can be shewn that everywhere from ch. iv. to ch. xiv, Hoséa always speaks of and to Israel as *he (thou)* or *they (ye)*, even when he compares it, as in iv. 16; x. 11, with feminine animals; on the other hand, the feminine figure and word is peculiar to ch. i.-iii. The LXX. actually read in this place, תִּבְ.

ix. 4, the accents require the meaning, *neither will they* (the men themselves) *be acceptable to him*. But vv. 3-5 food and sacrifices only are spoken of; and the poetic structure of the members also requires another division of the words. Also the following words must be correctly connected together and understood.

ix. 6, the use of תִּבְ with the *perf.* as forming of itself a protasis is of rare occurrence: but a sentence of this construction is admissible acc. § 357 *b*. And here the accents are correct, whilst the LXX. are at fault.—On תִּבְ after the *inf.* see §§ 350 *b*, 351 *a*, 234 *d*. I consider that it is not superfluous to remark that the words referring to the prophet ix. 7, sq. cannot be understood otherwise than as has been above explained: it is only at first sight that they seem strange; in reality Hoséa only recurs here to that mournful utterance as to the prophet

which he was unable to repress even at the commencement of the accusation iv. 5. The very characteristic utterance *my God* at the end of ver. 8, and at the end of the next strophe, ver. 17, which the LXX. have slurred, should be carefully noted.

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### III. EXHORTATION AND CONSOLATION IN A RETROSPECT OF THE EARLIER HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY, CH. IX. 10—XIV. 10.

#### 1. *First Retrospect*.—Ch. ix. 10—xi. 11.

From such dreary reflections upon the present and future the discourse at length rises with more freedom to the consideration of the more distant past, which is the first step towards clear knowledge in this dark region, and towards hope in the midst of this deep despair. It is true, this calling to mind of the ancient history and the formation of the community brings with it much that is bitter and painful; partly because with all the greatness and glory of those ancient days there were even then some instances of commencing folly and unfaithfulness, which vividly call to mind the same sins which have now grown to such vast proportions; and partly because the picture of the greatness and glory of those times conducts of itself to the mournful comparison with the present. Thus this retrospect rather leads back here at the beginning throughout the next four strophes once more to the same language which predominated in the previous section, and which with the depressing pictures of the present the prophet finds it so difficult to overcome: only the conclusion of the discourse is different, each strophe commencing quietly with the comparison of an important event of ancient days, the first and third strophe with a sign of unfaithfulness, the second and fourth with a picture of the pure greatness of those days which were generally so glorious. But the history of the past reminds the prophet of the firm imperishable

foundations of the true community, of the love of the true God which can never be wholly lost again in this community, of the eternal hopes : amidst the ashes of destroyed prejudices, of vanquished sins, there glimmers in secrecy the eternal love, and the more the evil presentiment of a complete annihilation of this community, which is destined for better things, makes itself felt, with the greater necessity and energy must this love revolt from it, thus in the fifth and last strophe the direct antithesis forces itself forward, and with inexpressible ardour the bright side of the divine intention shines forth, scattering all that is still dark from the previous gloomy forebodings ; the true community shall not be annihilated by any such chastisements but purified and perfected, Yahvé's chastisements present externally the appearance of anger and destruction, but within they are nothing but love and salvation !

9. 1. .

10 As grapes in the wilderness I found Israel, as a first early-fruit on the fig-tree saw I your fathers : | they came unto Báal-Peór and devoted themselves unto the shame, and became abominations like their paramour ! || Ephraïm—as birds will his power fly away, | so that there shall be no birth or gestation and no conception ; || although they bring up their sons, I make them orphaned depopulated : | for woe to them if I but look away from them ! || —Ephraïm appeareth to me like pleasure-groves of Tyrians planted in a pasture : | and Ephraïm shall lead forth his sons to the murderer ? || give them, Yahvé,—what wilt thou give ? | give them a child-  
15 less womb and drying breasts ! || “All their wickedness in Gilgal—yes there I hate them ! for the wickedness of their deeds will I drive them out of

my house, | will no more love them ! all their Rulers are Rebels !" || "A stroke hath Ephraïm already, their root is dried, fruit they will not bear : | even if they bring forth, I would slay the darlings of their womb !" || My God despiseth them because they hearkened not to him ; | that they may be fugitive among the nations ! ||

10.

2.

- 1 A spreading vine is Israel, who yieldeth fruit for himself : | the more his fruits become the more become his altars, the better his land the better statues he set up ! || slippery is their heart, now will they suffer ! | he will behead their altars, waste their statues. || Yes now will they say "we have no king ; | for we fear not Yahvé ; and the king what will he do for us ?"— || They spoke speeches, swore falsely, concluded alliances : | so then will punishment thrive like weeds upon the furrows of the
- 5 field ! || For the calves of the House-of-Evil will be alarmed the inhabitants of Samaria : | yes its people mourneth over it and its ecclesiastics will tremble over it, | for its glory that it is taken from it ; || it also will be carried to Assyria as homage to the warlike king : | shame will Ephraïm receive, and Israel will blush for his counsel. || Perished is Samaria his king, | as a chip upon the water's surface ; || and cast down are Evil's-heights, the sin of Israel ; thorn and thistle will grow upon their altars, | and they say to the mountains "cover us !" and to the hills "fall upon us !" ||

## 3.

From the days of Gibeon thou hast sinned Israel! |  
 there have they remained: should there not over-  
 10 take them in Gibeon a war against sons of wrong? ||  
 as soon as I wish it, will I chastise them, | and  
 nations will be gathered unto them when I chastise  
 them before both their eyes; || and Ephraim a  
 heifer taught accustomed to thresh, when I passed  
 along upon the beauty of her neck |—a rider will  
 I give Ephraim, Yuda shall plow, for himself Ya'qob  
 shall harrow! ||—Sow for yourselves unto righte-  
 ousness, reap according to mercy, break up your-  
 selves a fallow! | since it is time to seek Yahvé,  
 that he may come and rain righteousness for you. ||  
 Ye plowed wickedness—wrong ye reap, | eat fruit  
 of deception. || Because thou trustedst in thy cha-  
 riots, in the multitude of thy heroes: | therefore a  
 tumult will arise amongst thy clans, and all thy  
 fortresses will be laid waste, | as Salman laid waste  
 the house of Arbél on the day of the war, mother  
 together with her sons was dashed to pieces; ||  
 15 just so doth he to you at Bethel, on account of the  
 wickedness of your wickedness, | at dawn hath  
 Israel's king perished perished! ||

11.

## 4.

1 When Israel was young then I loved him | and  
 out of Egypt I called my son hither. || They have  
 been called hither—so much the further have they  
 gone away, | to Baals they sacrifice and burn in-  
 cense to the graven images! || And yet I taught

Ephraïm to walk, held him by his arms: | and they know not that I healed them? || With the bands of a man I drew them with cords of love, and became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their cheeks, | and softly towards him I gave to  
 5 eat. || Shall he not return to the land of Egypt, and the Assyrian he be his king? | —because they would not return; || so shall the sword then brandish in his cities, and destroy his bars and consume | —on account of their counsels! || since my people inclineth—in order to fall away from me, | upwards it is called—nevertheless it striveth not upwards. ||  
 5.

O how should I make thee Ephraïm, surrender thee Israel—O how should I make thee like Adma, treat thee as Sseboim! | my heart is turned against me, altogether my nerves of love boil. || I will not execute the heat of my anger, will not again destroy Ephraïm; | for I am God and not man, in thy midst is an Holy One | and I come not with heat. || —They will follow Yahvé as a father-lion which  
 10 roareth: || for hé will roar that the sons tremble from the sea hither, || tremble like birds from Egypt, like the dove from Assyria; | so I cause them to dwell in their houses, saith Yahvé.

1. ix. 10-12. The memory justly recurs first to the fair first age of the community, when the nation in the midst of its helplessness, under the deprivation of the desert found the true good, or rather, inasmuch as the good and divine always anticipates us, was found and taken possession of by Yahvé as the choicest fruit, although it was poor and naked in the wilderness (Mic. vii. 1.). But even at that early period occurred a sad

instance of unfaithfulness, the nation giving way for a moment in Môab to the seductions of the immoral Astarte-cultus, *devoted itself* not to Yahvé but to *the shame*, i.e. Astarte, and became equally abominable with the object of its impure love, Astarte, acc. Num. ch. xxv. And alas, it is precisely this unfaithfulness which reminds the prophet of the present equally impure Astarte-cultus in Gilgal, ver. 15, comp. iv. 15, the melancholy issue of the earlier unfaithfulness also suggesting that which is now approaching: instead of the number and power of the people being increased by such whoredom, its power will quickly pass away like the flight of birds, in a time of darkness productiveness will cease and the children that may have grown up will fall in battle, comp. iv. 10, since nothing more is required than that their true Lord should turn from them his eye, to expose them to all possible calamities! But then as the prophet dwells upon this destruction, it is as if he must sink under it, as his eye surveys the kingdom as it then existed in its glory: and in the deepest emotion he exclaims, vv. 13-17: Ephráim, as I (the prophet speaks at this new commencement, ver. 13, sq.) see and judge, is like a series of pleasure-groves which have been carefully planted by the artistic, refined Tyrians upon a wide and beautiful pasture, which when seen from a distance not only present the most lovely appearance, but also testify to the special care of their owner (as elsewhere it is called a vine, &c. x. 1); and this marvellously beautiful plantation, Gen xlix. 22, is now destined to destroy itself, to lead its sons into the field to be overthrown by the Assyrians (comp. Ez. xxxii. 10). How inconceivable! O would it not in that case be better (as the prophet in a paroxysm of despair, and with revulsion and almost convulsion in his language, cannot avoid expressing), that they should be condemned to barrenness instead of losing their youth thus! But the reply is heard from the divine "I," ver. 15, sq.: the magnitude of the ungodliness of the nation, the immoral cultus, the infatuation and obduracy of all princes (ver. 15 *d*, compare with vii. 5-7), has for a long time been too

great to permit God to preserve this kingdom ; thus the prophet must himself finally add, ver. 17, that this beautiful tree, which was just referred to, ver. 13, has internally an incurable hurt at its very root ; so that there can only be repeated what had been said before, ver. 11, sq., in other words.

2. Yes, begins the second strophe, x. 1-3, with a slight change in the previous thought, ix. 13, Israel according to the ancient history (Ps. lxxx. 9) is a widely climbing fruitful vine : but if one compares how Israel with his growing wealth instead of increasing his thankfulness to the true giver and founder of this prosperity, only multiplies the objects of his superstition and unfaithfulness, they must manifestly be charged with hypocrisy and unthankfulness towards Yahvé, and the corresponding punishment is, that they must lose by the Assyrian conquest all the false defences which they have chosen instead of the true spiritual protection, that is, the idols as well as the king whom they had taken against the will of Yahvé, viii. 3 ; xiii. 10, so that at last they must confess that they have no king at all, since they have forgotten how to fear the true spiritual king, and the earthly one cannot help them (comp. iii. 4). —The second half of the strophe, vv. 4-8, unwinds more fully the thread of these thoughts : from the prevailing and endless dishonesty, the vain talking and promises, Isa. lviii. 13, the perjury against Yahvé, the thoughtless formation of alliances, *e.g.* with Assyria, as they up to the present time pursue all this, nothing can result but an equally immeasurable divine punishment, growing like an indestructible weed upon the well-farmed field ; the calves, *i.e.* the idol gods, viii. 5 ; xiii. 2, will not avail them, on the contrary, these will themselves be destroyed by the enemy, however great the horror of their worshippers may be, and especially the splendid principal idol of the chief temple, the symbol of the god of the state and of the state itself, and therefore denominated the majesty of the land, Jer. ii. 11, will be carried away by the victor that it may adorn his triumph, however great the commotion of the ecclesiastics



(in the Hebrew a foreign word with an evil implication, because the evil thing came from abroad), and worshippers of it may be that this splendour, this most sacred object in the whole land is taken away from it, Isa. xlv. 1; and the king disappears as quickly (comp. the images, Job xxiv. 18; Ecc. xi. 1) as the idol temples of Bethel will be laid in ruins (ix. 6), so that at last nothing remains to them but illimitable despair, Luke xxiii. 30.

3. Once, says the new historical commencement, x. 9-11, the inhabitants of the city of Gibeon sinned very grievously, ix. 9, and the series of the transgressions of the whole nation may be traced up to that time: but just because the Israelites have now become generally Gibeonites, standing as it were in the sinful city (Isa. i. 10), must not a similar end come upon them to that which befel the Gibeonites, a war against iniquity? Certainly, such a punishment may be expected any moment; if Yahvé only desires it he will chastise them, and that not secretly but quite openly before all the world, correcting them at the concourse of conquering heathen nations before their *two eyes*, so that the heathen may see without any hindrance how I punish them, comp. Amos iii. 9, and Nah. ii. 2; iii. 5. Considered more particularly, this correction will be thus: this community, which hitherto resembled a young, proud cow, used by her owner for threshing and other noble uses of that sort, *i. e.* which had been accustomed to tread down, and to conquer (Mic. ii. 3; iv. 13), whilst the owner of this cow, Yahvé, hovered over her proud neck, as were he her driver, and rode near her unseen through the air (*i. e.* whilst Yahvé led her), now, on the contrary, receives from Yahvé a rider (victor) who humiliates her (Ps. cxxix. 3; lxvi. 12; Isa. li. 23), and she must perform all kinds of base and hard work like a common cow, she whom Hoséa had before, iv. 16, designated a stubborn young cow from her present behaviour towards her God.—It is indeed said as by way of limitation, vv. 12-15, work shall never cease, every man shall sow and cultivate the soil, and just

now is it high time to work : but you ought to put your hands to the right work, the work of righteousness, in order that the field farmed for righteousness, refreshed by the divine rain of righteousness, may really receive some day an inexhaustible harvest in conformity with the divine righteousness and grace : but you have perverted all this ; and, to come back to the chief subject of this strophe, precisely because Israel places his confidence merely upon such external things as the size of his army, will his end be like that of Arbéla, the famous city on the Tigris, which must shortly before have been taken by storm and barbarously destroyed by King Salman of Assyria, whose name does not occur elsewhere, probably the ancestor of Phûl. The end, therefore, ver. 15, is only a brief re-echo of the end of the previous strophe.

4. The fourth strophe, xi. 1, sq. compares the greatness of the past with the present. How beautiful the time of the youth of the community, when Yahvé loved Israel as a father his son, and took him from a foreign house into his own with the view of living with him for ever in close relationship ; comp. Deut. xxxii. 6, sq. But now—the more one has called them to him, the further they have gone out of the sight of those who called them (an intentionally indefinite phrase, Yahvé and the prophets being intended as ver. 7) to serve the idols in obscurity ! —The same thought is only further expanded, vv. 3-7, and the conclusion drawn from it. Once, in the youth of the community, I cherished the nation with all possible affection, as a careful guardian teaches his child to walk, holding it by the arms (Ps. xviii. 33, sq.), and they will not now consider that ? Or to come back to the figure of the previous strophe, x. 11, as a kind owner treats his ox humanely, both while it is at work under the yoke (Deut. xxv. 4 ; 1 Cor. ix. 9) and when it is feeding in the stall. Must not a nation which is so ungrateful go back into Egyptian slavery, under the Assyrian rule, after war has devastated its towns and its bars (*i.e.* the fortresses, especially the border fortresses by

which a country is either closed or opened, Nah. iii. 13 ; Mic. v. 5) ? Yes, it shall *return* to Egypt, because it will not *return* to Yahvé ; true it has an *inclination*, but only an *inclination not* to Him ; the nation is called *upwards*, to rise to the light and the true strength, notwithstanding it makes *no upward effort* !

5. Accordingly there might be nothing to look for but destruction, final endless destruction. But yet that is impossible in God and this community. Therefore before the end of the entire discourse, and as it were after the profoundest reflection, precisely the opposite bursts forth, vv. 8-11, that love which, notwithstanding all these necessary punishments, is still greater : having been thus established this community cannot wholly perish like Sodom ; love has once been employed upon it, and love cannot destroy its own work : and this God, who in reality is not an angry and passionate being, like a man, cannot desire simple destruction, but if at present he really causes the destruction of the existing kingdom because its salvation has become impossible, he will yet not cause Israel to be destroyed *again* in like manner. On the contrary, from the midst of this dispersion will arise under Yahvé an improved people ; as dispersed young lions collect at the roar of the father-lion, so the dispersed Israelites, whenever the divine signal of redemption is given, fly together from all quarters (Isa. xi. 11) into the Holy Land again, no more to experience such troubles. Here is clearly the conclusion ; the discourse has arrived at the destination to which it must come, acc. iii. 5. The imagery, ver. 10, sq., is taken from Joel iv. 16 ; Amos i. 2 ; ix. 15 ; comp. Isa. xxvii. 13.

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שׁוּרִי ix. 12 would be the same as סוּרִי if *I depart from them*. But it is much better to read שׁוּרִי if *I look away from them*, hide my face from them, as is said elsewhere, comp. xiv. 9. In that case the particle בָּ, which gradually acquired greater

freedom with respect to position, must be connected with the verb.

The words ix. 13 *a*, according to this reading, admit only the sense, “Ephraim is, as I see (or judge) according to the image (acc. to the form צִיּוֹר comp. with צִירָה, Ez. xliii. 11), a plant upon a pasture:” and thus the accents understand them. But the image would then be less perfect and beautiful, while Hoséa chooses everywhere forcible but correct, and, with all their brevity, well-defined images. We must therefore make up our minds to read פִּצְצִיר, and to take this word in its primary and correct sense, as it is explained *Hist. of Israel*, III. p. 306 (III. p. 419), *Alterth.* p. 301 (260); it is true that it occurs nowhere else without the feminine ending, but acc. § 176 *a* no further conclusion can be drawn from this fact than that the word is not used here as a *nomen unitatis*, as in fact Hoséa has much in his language that is uncommon; but that the word might then be construed as a feminine admits of as little doubt. It must be admitted that the ancient translators as well as the Massôra had already misunderstood it: but the image which it presents is really the most beautiful, and we learn from it also, if לְצִיּוֹר is correctly understood (comp. פִּנְעֵן xii. 8), that the small pleasure-groves, which were adorned with great luxury and maintained with great care, were really of Tyrian origin. The Tyrians may also have planted them in pleasant rows near each other, since any wealthy house might build and carefully maintain a separate Ashéra.—The sense of the whole is not clear unless the second member of ver. 13 is taken as a question.

*All their rulers are rebels*, ix. 15, is an attempt to render the play upon the words of the original; in the Hebrew the princes are called *refractory* or *stubborn*, as stoutly withstanding the divine truth. The image is acc. iv. 16 genuinely Hosean, and the paronomasia is repeated by Yesaya i. 23.

x. 1, רַב לִי הִרְפָּה is sufficiently explained by the phrase רַב לִי, comp. with the similar cases § 282 *c* note.

x. 2, the LXX. understand חֲלָק (intrans. for חֲלָק acc. § 130 *b*) incorrectly of the *divided* heart: which in this case would be far too feeble. It is the adjective *slippery*, which is briefly used for all that is deceptive, Ez. xii. 24.—The expression *behead* the altars is appropriate, because their gorgeous projections at the top (their *horns*) are first struck off according to the description Amos ix. 1; as to the *statues* by the altars, see *Alterth.* p. 158, sq. (135).

x. 5. פִּזְמָר can hardly be rendered by another word than our *Ecclesiastic* (Germ. *Pfaffe*): the word had been manifestly first introduced along with the Syrian idols and priests from Syria, is first used by Hoséa in the Hebrew written language in this passage, and is plainly repeated later, Zeph. i. 4; 2 Kings xxiii. 5, according to his precedent.—*Of his counsel*, x. 6, it will be ashamed, that it could ever adopt such counsel as to fall away from the true God, as likewise xi. 6 *b*.

The words x. 9 allow no other meaning. It may be observed that Hoséa often connects the commencement of a new strophe with the last word of the foregoing: גְּבוּעוֹת had just been used, but the LXX. quite unsuitably think here of the *days of the hill*, acc. Ps. xc. 2.

x. 10. The *Q'rî* reads with the LXX. עֵינֹת: but what the *two chief sins* were on account of which Israel should be corrected, would remain wholly problematic. In accordance with the sense of the whole discourse, the *K'thîb* עֵינָתָם is much the best if it may mean *their eyes*, whilst acc. § 174 *e* it could otherwise have no other meaning than *their springs*. In the passage, ii. 12, which in other respects is quite parallel, Hoséa has the usual לְעֵינַי; but by a peculiarity of the northern dialect the new form עֵינֹת could as well be formed as פְּגָדוֹת for פְּגָדִים Ps. xlv. 9, acc. § 177 *c*; the specification of the *two eyes* is then, for the sake of emphasis, just as Amos iii. 12. Yet the whole sense of the passage manifestly requires that the first אֶפְרָם and the second בְּאֶסְרָם should be considered as the

same verb ; and since *to fetter* would be too brief and obscure, the latter must also denote like יָסַר *to punish*.

The *deception*, x. 13, is primarily that indicated iv. 2 ; vii. 3 ; xii. 1 ; but its fruit is again itself vain and the hope of it illusory, as ix. 2.—That instead of בְּדַרְכֶּיךָ *upon thy way*, which would here be far too vague, בְּרִכְבֶּיךָ, according to the better reading of the LXX., is to be adopted, is shown by the whole context in this strophe, which treats especially of war and the relations to the powerful Heathen. With respect to *Salman*, ver. 14, at present no further particulars are known than what is conjectured, *Hist. of Israel*, iv. p. 150 (iii. p. 638).—The word עֲפִים is found here retaining its oldest meaning, see *Alterth.* p. 419, (158).

At *Bethel*, x. 15, since Bethel, just as elsewhere Gilgal, is specified as a centre of all kinds of moral corruption in that kingdom, and Bethel more especially, inasmuch as it was still the ancient chief seat of the Yahvé cultus for this kingdom. It was from misconception that ancient readers, as appears from the LXX., read instead, *O house of Israel*, as if it must be closely construed with *to you*. It is true Hoséa, according to p. 210, uses Beth-aven usually for Bethel ; yet he immediately uses this latter again, xii. 5.

Instead of קָחָם, xi. 3, it seems necessary to read אֶקָּחָם with the ancients, and the other reading may have been so firmly retained because the entire sense was missed on account of זָרַעְתִּי : *he took them into his arms as the shepherd does a sheep*, Isa. xl. 11, as if קָחָם were used for לָקָחָם : but the third person is itself unsuitable here, and the image of teaching to walk must be continued.

The *imperf.* xi. 4, describe a continuous state in that ancient time : but the *Volunt.* has not this force, and for that reason alone אִם cannot come from הִפָּחָה, meaning *I inclined to him*, which, besides, would make no sense here. The idea *gently* accords much better with the foregoing idea, *humanity* and

*love*; and this is one of the earliest passages in which *human* means precisely the same as *gentle, full of love*.

With respect to עַל in the sense of *upwards*, xi. 7, see § 220 a; and on רוּחַ as an inchoative, § 120 d.

xi. 9, it ought to need no remark that עִיר cannot mean *city*, but is quite another word, which occurs in the sense of *heat*, Ps. xxxi. 22; Isa. xxxi. 22, also; comp. *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1829, p. 1406.

## 2. *Second Retrospect*, ch. xii.-xiv.

The explanation might have been closed here; and there is clearly at this point a very marked section of the present book, the complexion of the very first words of the new opening, xii. 1-3, having the appearance that what follows is added, not so much as an addendum as a final word. The mournful condition of the Northern kingdom continues, and indeed grows worse, no improvement resulting even though the nation in its need put on the appearance of wishing to amend; Yuda also more and more disappointed all hope; the contention between Yahvé and the nation, mentioned above, iv. 1, continues, therefore, together with all its consequences, namely, threats and punishments. But Hoséa prefers in this as in the former piece to seek light and instruction from the ancient history; and if in the previous retrospect distress predominated, exhortation hardly once breaking way, x. 12, and a glimpse of better things meeting with most serious obstructions, in this, on the contrary, happy pictures of the early greatness of the nation, and of the love of Yahvé, exhortation and consolation are triumphant; the language, although here and there still overborne by a stormy violence, grows on the whole calmer and more finished, until at last the entire final strophe combines in the calmest and happiest tone the most beautiful exhortation with the most consolatory expectation, and, after such severe storms, brings all to a conclusion with the most joyous picture, the prophet himself sup-

plying in a few profound words the true instruction and the right hope. In the four strophes which precede the last, the method is somewhat different from that of the previous section, since each strophe no longer, as in that section, starts from a historical consideration ; comparison with the ancient history is here more frequent at all parts of the strophe, while there it is more exceptional, in the first and second almost after the manner of a homily. Here, on the contrary, the discourse and also every strophe start with the mention of a crime of the present which has already received sentence, with which the ancient history is compared in the course of the strophe, save that in the fourth, where the influence of the near conclusion is strongly felt, this comparison is entirely absent.

12.

1.

- 1 They of Ephraïm have compassed me about with deception, and Israel's house with deceit ; | also Yuda wavereth still with God, and with the faithful Holy One. || Ephraïm pursueth wind and hunteth after storm, daily it increaseth lies and violence ; and a covenant is concluded with Assyria, oil carried to Egypt. || A contention also hath Yahvé with Yuda, | and he must visit Yaqob according to his ways, according to his works reward
- 5 him.||—In the womb he anticipated his brother, | and in his manly strength he wrestled with God, || and wrestled against the Angel and conquered, wept and prayed to him : | at Bethel will he find us, and there speak with us, || by Yahvé the God of the Hosts, | as Yahvé renowned ! || But thou to thy God must then return, | keep mercy and right, and wait upon thy God continually !||



## 2.

Kanáan holdeth deceptive balances, | he loveth to cheat; || and Ephráim said “yet I am become rich, have gained wealth for me : | all my riches will not gain for me guilt which would have to be punished!” || But I Yahvé thy God from the land of Egypt | —yet will I cause thee to dwell in tents as on the days of the feast! || —And I spoke to the prophets, | indeed I increased the visions and gave similitudes by the prophets:— || are they of Gilead vain—then they will become nothing but nothingness ; || in Heaphouse [lit. *Gilgal*] offered they bulls—then their altars will become like stone-heaps upon the furrows of the fields ! || —And Yaqob fled unto the Arám-plain, | and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept watch; || and by a prophet Yahvé led Israel up out of Egypt, | and by a prophet was he watched:— || Ephráim hath aroused the bitterest dislike, | and his blood guiltiness will descend upon him, his reproach will his Lord repay him ! ||

13.

## 3.

1 As Ephráim spoke of revolt, it made uproar in Israel, | then it became guilty though Báal—and died. || And now they continue to sin, and made themselves molten images of their silver, | after their model of idols, pure work of artists: | to even these speak men who sacrifice, calves they kiss ! || Therefore they will be as the morning cloud and as the early passing dew, | as chaff which whirleth

away from the floor, and as smoke from the window ! ||—And I [am] yet Yahvé thy God from the land of Egypt, | I beside whom thou knowest no God, and helper is there none without me, || —I knew thee in the wilderness, | in the land of burning  
 5 heats. || As they fed they became satisfied, satisfied and their heart was lifted up; | therefore they forgot me ! || So will I become to them like a lion, | as a panther on the way will I lie in wait, || will meet them like a bereaved bear, and rend the caul of their heart, | and will eat them there like a lion, so that the wild beast of the field shall rip them up ! ||

## 4.

It has destroyed thee O Israel, that thou to me  
 10 to thy help— ! || Where is thy king then ? so may he help thee in all thy cities ! | and thy judges of whom thou saidst “give me king and princes !” || I give thee a king in my anger | and take him away in my wrath ! || Bound up is Ephraïm’s guilt, locked up his punishment; | pains of a mother come upon him: | he is an unwise son, that he did not come time enough into the outbreak of children ! || (From the hand of hell I will redeem them, from death deliver them ! | where are thy plagues O death, where is thy sting thou hell ? | resentment shall be  
 15 hid from mine eyes ! ) ||—Though he be amongst brothers a fruit-child [*Ephraïm*], the East the wind of Yahvé will come rising from the wilderness, so that his fountain will dry and his spring be scorched up; | he will plunder the treasure of all precious

14. utensils! || Samaria will suffer, because it was dis-  
 1 obedient to its God, | by the sword they will fall,  
 their children shall be dashed in pieces, its pregnant  
 mothers ripped up! ||

## 5.

Return O Israel unto Yahvé thy God! | for thou  
 hast stumbled by thy guilt. || Take with you words  
 and return unto Yahvé, | say to him: "all guilt O  
 forgive and receive good things, let us pay as  
 bullocks our lips! || the Assyrians shall not help  
 us, upon horses we will not ride, nor any more call  
 the work of our hands our God, | thou by whom  
 the orphan findeth favour!" ||—"I will heal their  
 falling away, gladly love them; | for my anger is  
 5 turned away from him! || I will be as the dew unto  
 Israel, it shall blossom like lilies, and his roots  
 strike like Libanon; || his shoots shall spread, | as  
 the olive-tree may his splendour be, a scent may he  
 have like Libanon! || those dwelling in his shadow  
 shall again produce corn, | and blossom like the  
 vine whose scent is as wine of Libanon! || Ephraim  
 —what has he still to do with idols? | I have re-  
 sponded and will look upon him; | I am as a green  
 10 cypress, from me is thy fruit found." || —Who is  
 wise that he may understand this, prudent that  
 he may perceive it? | for straight are the ways  
 of Yahvé, and righteous [people] walk in them, |  
 but backsliders stumble therein. ||

1. xii. 1-3. Introduction and review of the condition of  
 the nation to the present time. *Wind* and *storm* similar to  
 viii. 7; he who has once set his mind upon it pursues with all  
 the more zeal that which is most vain. *Oil* as a present and

tribute, as in Isa. xxx. 6. But that Yuda is so expressly introduced here, vv. 1, 3, is a peculiarity of this introduction to the last main section.

And yet when one duly considers what Israel is, both as regards his origin and his lasting vocation, the two ancient names which the father of his tribe bore indicate of themselves his high dignity and accordingly what he ought properly to do; as Yaqob, *i.e.* Heelman (who holds the heel of his foregoer), he shows even before his birth how he is destined to anticipate his brother, to overcome men (which in this place denotes rivalry in a good sense, the meaning of such names being very elastic, and not cunning, as Gen. xxvii. 36); as Israel, he wrestled with all the force of ripe manhood against God (there being no great thing which the ordinary man must not also at the same time with every exertion gain from God by conquest), and fought for himself a blessing from him, yet in the end not defiantly, for defiance would be of no avail here, but by weeping and prayer (a still more lucid amplification of the beautiful legend than that of Gen. xxxii. 27). Inasmuch as the final glorification of Yaqob is located by the legend at Bethel (at all events by the earlier legend, Gen. xxxv. 15), the application is obvious: at Bethel, the place which is at present so desecrated by idolatry, this God of blessing will find us and speak with us in the same manner as he once found and blessed our tribal father there, by Yahvé this is true! (Joel iv. 21). Only the present nation must do its part! (ver. 7).

2. The second strophe supplies *three* compressed comparisons. (1) vv. 8-10: it is true Israel as it now is recalls rather Kanáan, as this nation was in early times, and still is; Israel has adopted the evil customs and prejudices of Phœnicians, in every possible way seeks after material possessions, and imagines at the same time that all its many *gained* riches will not *gain* (contract) for it any guilt that would constitute sin, *i.e.* that must be punished: but its true ancient God, who has known it from the days of Egypt to the present time, will drive it into the wilderness where it must dwell in tents again (as above

ii. 16), as it now does for its amusement at the harvest feast—to teach it again that material possessions neither justify before God nor render help. (2) vv. 11, sq. : and the same ancient God has never disowned himself as a continual revealer, constantly sending prophets and by them visions and similitudes in abundance, *i.e.* prophetic instruction both of a higher character, not so easily understood, and of a lower, more easily intelligible:—if therefore in Gilead, vi. 8, and Gilgal, the people still persist in their wickedness, both civil and religious, no excuse is then permissible ; if Gilead is morally *null* (*nichtig*) and nothing, then it will be externally also *nothing but nothingness* (*nichts als nichts*), annihilated ; if in Gilgal shameful sacrifices are presented to Heathen gods, (acc. iv. 14, sq.) then their altars will become like *gallim*, *i.e.* scattered stone-heaps, upon the open field, ruins (Micah i. 6 ; Amos ix. 1) ; as is said with a double paronomasia, because they express everything strikingly with the brevity which is here required.—(3) vv. 13-15 : further, the ancient history shows everywhere in the case of Yaqob, as in the case of Moses, how wonderfully the divine care is manifested precisely in dangers, Yaqob having fled into Mesopotamia in great distress, was gloriously led even as a serving shepherd, Israel redeemed by Moses out of Egypt and preserved in the wilderness:—therefore what shall be said of Israel as it now is, which even without having come into such danger and distress, shamefully forsakes its preserver from pure love of wickedness (as *e.g.* that of Gilead, ver. 12) ? It must have aroused the most bitter displeasure, the recompense cannot tarry !

3. The chief sin which burdens the Northern kingdom, which is strongly emphasised at the commencement of the third strophe, xiii. 1, and again in the fourth, ver. 10, sq. and was considered indeed previously, viii. 4 ; x. 3, is still this, that this kingdom originated in a confused love of innovation, thoughtless sedition, and revolution : it carries the germ of death in its birth, seduced by a false God to this sin, as is gra-

phically said with a brevity which is so exceedingly suited to this lamentable case, ver. 1. And still it suffers from this germ of death, the sins of its commencement being still continued: witness of which is the infatuated idolatry in which men, yea, men actually sacrificing, rational beings, speak in prayer to a dead idol, kiss calves by way of homage (x. 5) ! Therefore they will be led into captivity, disappearing from their country as quickly as any evanescent thing whatsoever, ver. 3, comp. vi. 4, Ps. i. 4.—If one compares the ancient history with this, what a contrast ! He, the ancient, only true and only living, succouring God, accepted the nation which was perishing in the wilderness, far from all help, ver. 4, sq. ; comp. xi. 1 ; ix. 10. But the enjoyment of favour, of abundance which now took the place of scarcity, this it was which made them wanton like a pasturing animal upon a very rich pasture (iv. 16 ; x. 1 ; Deut. xxxii. 13-20) ; accordingly their benefactor, having been treated so ungratefully, must become more and more like a beast of prey, lying in wait for such an over-fed, wanton animal, falling upon them at the right moment at the most exposed point, surrendering them to the smaller wild beast (the Assyrians) for further depredation.

4. In the fourth strophe a positive conclusion is put to the one aspect of the case, which in spite of all retrospects remained predominant in the discourse ; in order that the mournful side of the truth, which it was specially needful to establish, might be entirely abandoned after it had been thus finally established. The final sentence against the accused is primarily drawn, as at the commencement of the previous strophe, only from the above facts in the review of the history of this kingdom, and pronounced in plain words : the kingdom in its present character is condemned to death, to death by Assyrian conquest ; and the time is near when thereby the whole nation also, the community, will come into mortal danger : but with this picture comes a conversion within the thought itself, and violently, from the midst of this condemnation and the picture of mortal

danger at hand, breaks out (ver. 14) the still higher truth which lay in the background, that this mortal danger, this severe new crisis of a better time, cannot result in the death of the community itself; and this other aspect exclusively is calmly unfolded in the following strophe, as the final possible outlook.

With the labouring voice, interrupted by sobs, of a judge whose duty it is to pronounce the final heavy sentence, after all possible pleadings and considerations have been gone through, the discourse begins, ver. 9: *it has destroyed thee that (thou) to me that is to thy help*—(becamest unfaithful)! an unusually broken sentence. But how is he to be helped who turns against his help? that the false helps which the Northern kingdom chose are purely vain is clear enough, especially the kings which it demanded with a defiance which was in its case so foolish (viii. 4; x. 3); if people will take defiantly such false helps, they will indeed receive them (as in fact the Northern kingdom 200 years ago obtained their own kings as they demanded), but not from a gracious but an angry God, who on that very account takes back again in anger what he had given in anger! ver. 10, sq.—Thus the sentence of punishment has been long ago pronounced, ver. 12, it lies already carefully sealed and preserved as it were in the divine archives (Job xiv. 17), to be executed at its proper time; and already this time of execution of the punishment is announced, the painful new birth in its first pangs: then shall be born a new Israel, ver. 13, rejuvenated and improved; every birth is difficult and threatens death, yet no salvation is possible before this new son is really born; the sooner therefore the better, and were he a wise son, he would himself (by timely repentance) hasten his birth as much as he could, would with his own strength press to the mouth of the womb, in order thus to be born as soon as possible (whilst the longer the child's delays, the greater are the pains and dangers): but with his usual want of wisdom he delays, comes not time enough into the place of exit and so increases the

pains ! Mic. iv. 9, 10 ; Isa. xxxvii. 3. Accordingly mortal danger would be at hand : but, no, it shall not prevail, Yahvé will yet save him from death, before whose love, which alone lasts for ever, death loses his fatality, his weapons ! ver. 14.— Yet to come back to the proper subject of this strophe : although Ephraïm, as his name itself implies, may be the most fruitful and powerful tribe (comp. similarly x. 1), the source of external fruitfulness and power (Isa. li. 1, 2) may be dried up like any spring of water by a burning Samûm with higher divine power, and the Assyrian will be the divine instrument for the destruction of this power, x. 14, sq., as is finally said with plainer words than at any previous time, xiv. 1.

5. With all the greater freedom and peculiar beauty the soft contrary voice can make itself heard in the last strophe, joyously announcing what rests beyond these storms in the eternal bosom of divine love ; and already every one is prepared finally to hear this alone. Return to this love on the part of the community is the first requisite : the prophet not only exhorts to this, but also shows how it must be, how and with what feelings the repentant must approach the divine favour : not with external although magnificent sacrifices, with bullocks, *e.g.* xii. 12, but with words, *with lips*, *i.e.* with the living promises of the spirit wrestling for mercy and offering good things, and especially casting away the chief transgressions of that time, namely, confidence in false resources (*e.g.* the help of the Assyrians), pride (riding upon war-horses, Isa. xxx. 26) and idolatry.— Accordingly the heavenly love responds to these advances with its blessing, vv. 5-9, and this is not merely the healing of earlier hurts, ver. 5, but much higher prosperity than before, vv. 6-8 : quickened by the divine blessing as by dew (vi. 3), the tree of the community shall blossom as much as the most beautiful plants, as much as Libanon with the splendour of its high fragrant trees, and those persons who sit under the shadow of this tree shall reap fruit (with reference to ii. 10 ; vii. 14), and themselves blossom like the most fragrant wine on



Lebanon, x. 1. There is prosperity then when Ephraim least of all will have anything to do with miserable idols, since it possesses indeed the living, eternal, beneficent God himself, and that correspondence between human effort and the divine blessing, which was further described above, ii. 23-25, is present, ver. 9.—Yet because the prophet knew how little these high hopes and pure, upright thoughts were then understood and applied, he adds in his own name the weighty word, ver. 10, in order to excite the attention of at least all those who were willing to hear, Jer. ix. 11 ; Matt. xi. 15.

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On xii. 1. the root רוד denotes *to ramble*, waver, whence in the Hifil *to seek*, desire ; here exactly the opposite of the faithful man.

On xii. 4-7 it may be briefly remarked that the words permit no other sense than that given above ; especially can ver. 6 contain only an oath, which is here quite suitable ; and besides nothing is more telling than that thus early at the end of the first strophe, the same power of exhortation and hope will break through which obtains the full victory finally only in the last strophe. In ver. 7, שׁוּב--בִּי is only precisely the opposite of סוּר בִּי vii. 14, comp. xiii. 9 ; it is true it stands with עֲדָ xiv. 2, but that also is stronger than אָל.

xii. 9, the repeated מִצָּץ makes clearly a paronomasia, and accordingly a somewhat unusual sentence, Hoséa affecting both.

In xii. 12 it appears surprising that nothing more than the sacrifice of bullocks at Gilgal is so severely blamed. But it must be remembered that in this place we have not as usual בָּקָר *large-cattle*, but *bulls* : which points to a special kind of animal sacrifice, and we cannot doubt but that precisely that special kind of bull-sacrifice is intended which, acc. *Hist. of Israel*, iv. p. 26 (iii. p. 471, sq.), was introduced into the kingdom of the Ten Tribes from the first.

xii. 13, sq. it is clearly not accidental that Israel, *i.e.* the community, for which Moses gave himself so much trouble, answers to the wife for whom Yaqob served. This is probably the oldest instance of such a spiritualising of the ancient history; but the way to it had then been long prepared by the genuinely prophetic conception of the community as the bride and wife of a Higher One, a conception so very familiar to Hoséa himself, ch. 1-3.

xiii. 1, רָהַתְּ, formed acc. § 158 *a*, means incontestably *alarm*, *uproar*, and the entire phrase is the exact opposite of דָּבַר שְׁלוֹם; and that נָשָׂא might also denote in a bad sense *insurgere*, although this is more definitely expressed by הִתְנַשֵּׂא Num. xvi. 3, follows from שׂוֹא Ps. lxxxix. 10, where it is explained.—If בְּתַבּוּנָם xiii. 2 could really stand for נָתַתְּ acc. § 257 *d* note, according to their insight would give no sense here, nor suit the following word. The correct meaning, both as regards the entire context and the structure of the members, is obtained if the form בְּתַבּוּנָם is restored, to which the following word is subordinated acc. § 291 *b*. Thus Hoséa scourges here two things with a clear distinction: (1) that they make idols of *their own silver*, *i.e.* money which they might employ to a better purpose, as previously he had ridiculed this, ii. 10; viii. 4; and (2) that notwithstanding they could only have them made by human art after the ancient model of idols, which is brought forward in two short members. But since, after what has been said above, xii. 12, and the mention of *calves*, it cannot be doubted that the idol worship introduced by Yarob'am I. is intended, at which there were by no means human sacrifices, it follows therefrom, and alone suits the immediate context, that the last words ver. 2 mean to say, *yes, precisely to these* (לָהֶם הֵם) must be closely connected contrary to the accents, acc. § 311 *a*) inanimate idols speak sacrificers of men (men who sacrifice) (acc. § 287 *g*), yes actually men, and they *kiss calves*! The old error of the LXX. that human sacrifices are here spoken of, ought not in our days to be repeated.

xiii. 7, to think of the Assyrians as intended by אֲשׁוּר, as the LXX. and the moderns do, would be quite out of place; because here nothing is intended but the final punishment of the whole nation, but there is no reference for instance, as vii. 12, to those who were as ambassadors *upon the way to Assyria*. Further the vocalization יִאֲדָרִי accords better with the whole tone of the words.

xiii. 9, the verb *to be unfaithful* might the more readily be omitted since the whole context presupposes it, and also the same construction of such a verb with פָּ- was already supplied; but the verb is supplied at the end of the strophe xiv. 1 by מָרָה as the discourse grows calmer.

The concluding words, xiii. 12, resemble the later ones of Isa. viii. 16, but have another application here.

That נָחַם xiii. 14 may mean *resentment* cannot be doubted: הִתְנַחֵם Gen. xxvii. 42 means “thy brother *resents* thee unto death,” and that shorter abstract nouns are formed from longer verb-stems is shown §. 144 *b*. The word has clearly the meaning of a secret, treasured, ancient grudge, which, just as Gen. xxvii. 42, it is apprehended may easily change at some time into the death-blow of the enemy against whom it is felt: but a grudge of this sort is precisely what God will not see, will not have before his eyes, and will strictly chide death itself if he should purpose to raise his sting against him who is thus threatened. The whole is only another strong but brief outbreak of the feeling of xi. 8-11.

xiii. 15. The פִּי is certainly to be taken acc. §. 362 *b*.—The transition from the figure to *him himself*, the plundering Assyrian, is very rapid, but not too violent after what has been said above, x. 5, sq., 14; and *the precious utensils* are of course those of the temple so often referred to at Bethel, x. 15.

xiv. 8. זָכָרִי like xii. 6, seems to mean, *whose fame* is like that of the wine of Libanon. But in the entire context the object is to give prominence to the *scent* of this vine, and this signification belongs to the word as much as the other, comp.

*Dichter des A. B.* II. p. 416, sq.; this signification is formed from the idea of *pricking, sticking*. In that case the word should probably be pronounced differently, something like זָכַרְיָה.

xiv. 9. It is necessary with the LXX. to read לוֹ instead of לִי.

### III. ANONYMOUS PROPHETS.

Besides these two literary prophets there were in those days incontestably many others, whose writings have been lost. As a fragment from the writings of one of them we have preserved (as will be shown below) in Isa. vii. 8, the sentence, *and within sixty-five years Ephráim will be broken, no more a nation*. This sentence is foreign to the context; but it plainly owes its origin to a prophet who lived a considerable time before Yesaya, one whom we may very well take to have been a senior contemporary of Hoséa. In the use of the more contemptuous name of Ephráim he agrees with Hoséa, 'Amôs not having known this usage. But that we may not suppose he was Hoséa himself, is also shown by the verb יָחַת which is not used by Hoséa, while, on the other hand, it is frequently found in the writings of Yesaya and the other prophets of Yuda. He may, therefore, have been a prophet from Yuda who occupied himself much with the kingdom of the Ten Tribes also, just as the following prophet did.

The piece of another prophet from Yuda and of 'Uzzia's time has been incorporated in the older oracle concerning Môab which has been preserved in Yesaya xvi. 1-6, and will be dealt with below on Isa. ch. 15, sq.

## II.—YESAYA AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

## 1. ANONYMOUS PROPHETS.

## BOOK OF ZAKHARYA, CH. IX.—XI. ; XIII. 7-9.\*

If these three chapters are restored to their original connexion with the words which are at present thrown into another connexion, although they incontestably originally formed one whole,† we obtain here a complete whole both as regards language and matter, a distinct little book which lacks nothing to make it intelligible or perfect. This book owed its origin clearly to a prophet from whom nothing else has been preserved, but who from all marks and evidences was a senior contemporary of Yesaya. And we also assign him a place here for the reason, that although a prophet of Yuda he bore upon his heart especially the fortunes of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, and in that respect most suitably follows close upon the previous prophets.

The prophet lets us see that he was an inhabitant of the Southern kingdom, both by single expressions as ix. 7, and by his tone and manner of looking at things; the Messianic hopes and imagery in particular have been formed and

\* Comp. as to the position of Zakharya, ch. ix.—xiv., *supra* p. 95, sq., *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* vii. p. 136, sq., ix. p. 161, sq., *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1862, p. 881, sq., 1864, p. 990, sq.

† Since 1829 I have always maintained in my lectures and briefly explained in 1837 in the *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, I. 3, that the words, xiii. 7-9, supply no sense in the connexion in which they now stand, on the other hand supposed to stand after ch. xi. not only completely fit in but are also quite necessary to complete the sense of this chapter. The full proof must be sought for in the whole of what is here said at various points upon the portion, ch. ix.—xiv. It has been repeatedly attempted to deny this since 1840, but only upon poor grounds; comp. further the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* iv. pp. 48, sq., 50, sq.; x. p. 191, sq.; xi. p. 207.

Further, nothing is more baseless and without proof than the supposition which has recently been made and accepted by many that the pieces, ch. ix.—xiv., are by a prophet, or even two prophets, who also bore the name of *Zakharya*, and whose writings on that account were attached to this book. Enough of such baseless suppositions!

elaborated and are so greatly predominant in his mind exactly after the manner of his fellow-countryman and contemporary Yesaya, whom he resembles in other respects, and to whom he is second only in the telling force of his oratory and the limpid clearness of his style. But from the very first he must have devoted his attention and energies as a prophet especially to the Northern kingdom, as incontestably appears from ch. xi. ; and as a fact the circumstance of the last years of this kingdom were so full of vicissitudes and so hard to reform that it is easy to understand how even a prophet in Jerusalem might follow its fortunes with the undivided care and power of the prophetic thought and speech ; not to mention the fact that 'Amôs and Hoséa had prepared the way, and that many things in our prophet appear as an echo of Hoséa, as xiii. 9, comp. Hos. ii. 24, sq.

If we enquire as to the exact time to which this piece, so remarkable both in matter and style, belongs, it appears from the imagery ch. xi. that at that time the wild, barbarous king Pégach ruled in the Northern kingdom, and from x. 2, 7-10 that the Assyrians had already taken from this king the extensive territories in the East and North, Gilead and Libanon as is said x. 10 and Mic. vii. 14, an event which all the circumstances lead us to assign to the earlier half of his twenty years' reign, 2 Kings xv. 29 ; Isa. viii. 23. We see, indeed, from xi. 14, that the good understanding between the Northern and the Southern kingdom had also been disturbed, from which disturbance the march of Pégach, in alliance with Damascus, against Jerusalem ultimately proceeded, Isa. ch. vii. But of this march itself there is not the slightest trace here, and the fall of Damascus is not represented, ix. 1, as so near as it is in Isa. viii. 1-4. We are, on the contrary, justified in supposing, that a considerable time elapsed between that disturbance and this open war, an interval to which the oracle Isa. ix. 7-20 together with our piece belongs. We see here the prophet, who is living in Jerusalem, with the greatest sympathy following

the severe losses and humiliations, the dejection and weakness of the Northern kingdom, x. 7-12, in accord with what we have to suppose was its condition during the first years after the Assyrian conquest of those important territories, and before the march Isa. ch. vii. And in reality the deep love which this prophet from Yuda extends to the kingdom of Ephraim is one of the most beautiful as well as one of the most prominent traits of this oracle: he is, indeed, most sensibly convinced that it is from Yuda only that the deliverance and any great leader of the army and nation must arise, ix. 9, sq.; x. 4; but that does not prevent his attention to the Northern kingdom, just as if there never had been a rupture between the two kingdoms, nor his desire that the same true deliverance, new courage and honour, may come to it, ix. 13; x. 6, 7-12; xiii. 7-9.

While this was the condition of Samaria, and in Jerusalem itself there were not living very many better rulers and shepherds of the people, x. 3, in the North the power of the Assyrians, which was just then at its height, was creating great alarm, and a new and severe storm seemed then to be collecting to break over all the more southern kingdoms. The manner in which this storm is conceived by our prophet and its development foreboded, is a mark both of the genuine prophetic vein and the peculiar character of this prophet. And here the higher certainty in general should be noted with which this prophet foresees the approach and raging of this storm over all the southern kingdoms, whilst to the common view in these kingdoms there is no great danger at hand. And precisely because he sees even in this approaching storm and in the seething of the wild elements the spirit and the action of Yahvé, and takes note of the purpose which is at work in it, the impending agitation does not appear to him as simply mournful and unfortunate: in the stir of human affairs there is also stirring the divine spirit, and this spirit produces, as the goal and end of all its movements and tendencies,

the consummation of its eternal work, prosperity and peace, the Messianic age; and the more deeply disturbing the stir is, so much the more certain and early this salvation appears to approach. Accordingly, it justly seemed to the prophet as if Yahvé once more surveyed and examined more keenly the fortunes of all men and nations, as if He himself had become more alive and watchful, ix. 1 *b*, 8 *b* ; x. 3 *b*. But at that time Ssion with its temple appeared the solitary stay and the necessary centre of the nascent community of justice and of true religion, and actually was such as long as such great prophets as Yesaya and the author of this piece were working in it in conjunction with other heroes who were not very unlike them. Therefore the prophet forebodes that when that destructive storm shall rage over the countries, in contrast with them, there will come for Ssion and Yuda victory and exaltation together with the commencement of the long desired Messianic prosperity, the root of which can be in Yuda only: for the storm cannot destroy the true sanctuary, which is immoveably secure and defended by invisible power; while if this remains unshaken, it is all the more certain that the countries and nations which the storm casts down, because they have no inward strength, will become the possession of Ssion, and with new and higher courage, with Messianic enthusiasm, it will rise from its past humiliation and weakness to glory and extended dominion.—This Messianic rise and regeneration is conceivable indeed only as attended by the disappearance of all that is opposed to it, all kinds of superstition and injustice, wherever this new life is ascendant; together with the Messiah none of those leaders of the nation who at present mislead and corrupt it, can remain; and *that* Yahvé who is sending that one gentle righteous king, sends also the sword for the extermination of those misleaders. If this is generally valid, of Yuda too, it is again most particularly and necessarily valid with reference to the Northern kingdom, with respect to which the prophet only too clearly



foresees, that the divine care itself can be of no more use to it, and that for it new prosperity can arise only from its complete destruction, x. 3; xi. 1-17; xiii. 7-9.

Thus, then, the piece falls of itself into two halves, in conformity with two aspects of its main thought: the first presents the elevating aspect of the future, the second adds the dark side of the prospect somewhat more briefly; in the first half the chief share of the glory falls to Ssion, but a share of it is also granted to the Northern kingdom; and at the end the discourse confines itself to this unhappy realm; in the second half this kingdom only is spoken of. Both halves stand in the closest mutual connexion, the second especially being unintelligible without the first.

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1. *The joyous aspect of the Future*, ch. ix.-x.

A heavy storm rolls with this threat immediately from North to South, striking all the heathen kingdoms, beginning with Damascus, and chastising each according to its deserts: but Ssion, as this threat continues to be fulfilled, will be marvellously protected, ix. 1-8. It is from Ssion that the Messiah and prosperity must proceed on every account: Ssion may much rather rejoice than mourn, great prosperity will yet come from Yahvé by means of his people which is called to high things! ix. 9-16. It is eternally true, if one looks closely into the nature of Yahvé, that prosperity is possible in Yahvé alone, the good and gracious God, and will certainly be granted by him, ix. 17—x. 6; then will unhappy Ephraïm also again acquire courage and honour! x. 7-12. This discourse accordingly falls into four long and symmetrical strophes, of which the two in the middle are the most prominent: peculiarly elevated is the language of the second in the elaborate description of the Messiah and his age; the first leads up to this chief matter, the fourth is added merely on account of the special reference to the Northern kingdom which runs through the whole book.

9.

1.

1 The flight of the word of Yahvé reacheth Chad-rak's land, and Damascus is its resting-place : | for Yahvé's is the survey of men and of all tribes of Israel ; || and also Hamâth which bordereth theron, | Tyre and Sidon, because it [is] so very wise, || and Tyre built for herself towers, | and heaped up silver like dust, fine gold as mire of the streets : || yet the Lord will make her poor, and cast her treasures into the sea, | she herself  
 5 devoured by fire. || — Should 'Ashqalon see it, she will fear, Ghazza and tremble exceedingly, and 'Eqrôn that her hope deceived ; || the king will disappear from Ghazza, and 'Ashqalon not remain, || but bastards will dwell in Ashdôd, | and I exterminate the pride of the Philistine, || remove the pieces of blood from his mouth, the abominations from between his teeth, | so that he also remaineth for our God, and becometh like a district-governor in Yuda, and 'Eqrôn like a Yebusite. || — Then encamp I about my house as a rampart, that none invade and none return, and no more an oppressor overrun them : | for now have I seen with my own eyes ! ||

2.

Rejoice greatly daughter Ssion, shout daughter Jerusalem : | behold thy king will come to thee, come righteous and victorious, | lowly riding upon the ass, and upon the young she-ass's-foal ; ||  
 10 then I exterminate chariots from Ephráim, and

horses from Jerusalem, | the battle-bow is exterminated, and he will speak peace to the nations, | ruling from sea to sea, and from the River to the borders of the land. ||—Even for the blood of thy covenant—I release thy captives from the pit without water; || return to the dry place ye prisoners of hope! | also to-day it runneth: “double I render to thee!” || —For I bend Yuda for me as a bow, fill it with Ephraim, | and rouse thy sons Ssion against thy sons Yavan, | and make thee like a hero’s sword: || and Yahvé will appear on high to them, and as the lightning his arrow goeth forth, | and the Lord Yahvé bloweth the trumpet and marcheth in the storms of the South; || Yahvé of Hosts will protect them: | thus they devour treading down sling-stones, and drink noisily as from wine, | bespattered as a sacrificial bowl, as the corners of an altar. || Thus Yahvé their God helpeth them on that day as the flock of his people: | for crown-stones will glitter upon his ground! ||

## 3.

Yet how good and how beautiful he is! | corn maketh the youths, must the maidens to shoot  
 10. up; || ask from Yahvé rain at the late-time! Yahvé  
 1 createth thunder-flashes, | and pouring-rain giveth he to them, to every one herbage in the field. || For the house-gods speak vanity, and the sooth-sayers always saw falsely, | and the dreams—vanity speak they, vainly comfort they: | therefore they wander forth like sheep, miserable because

there are no shepherds. || —Against the shepherds is my wrath enkindled, and upon the goats will I visit it! | for Yahvé of Hosts visiteth his flock the House of Yuda, and maketh them like his superb charger in the war: || from him cornerstone, from him stay, from him battle-bow, from him will go  
 5 forth every exactor together; || and they become like heroes treading upon street-mire in battle, and fight because Yahvé is with them, | so that the riders of the horses are ashamed. || Thus will I strengthen Yuda's House, and help Yoseph's House, | and bring them home because I have had mercy upon them, so that they become as those who have never been despised: || I am indeed Yahvé their God that I should hear them! ||

## 4.

Then like heroes are they of Ephráim, then their heart rejoiceth as from wine, | their sons seeing it rejoice, in Yahvé their heart will rejoice. || If I hiss to them I assemble them, because I have redeemed them: | who increase then as they increase! || Or if I scatter them among the nations, they still afar off remember me, | live with their  
 10 sons and return home; || yea I bring them home from the land of Egypt, and from Assyria I gather them, into Gilead and Libanon's land I bring them, so that there is not room for them! || And if they pass through the sea of straitness, He smiteth into the sea of waves, so that all the depths of the river dry up: | and Assyria's pride is

cast down, Egypt's pride will depart. || Thus I strengthen them by Yahvé, and in his name will they walk, | saith Yahvé.

1. The word of Yahvé, threatening punishment, takes its flight upwards in order to descend upon this or that land, and wherever it reaches it begins to chastise; similarly almost at the same time, Isa. ix. 7. This storm rolls destructively over all heathen kingdoms, vv. 1-7, but Ssion is a great turning-point, ver. 8, which is described more particularly in the following strophe. It rolls from the North-east, and concerns principally three kingdoms, one of which is denominated here poetically Chadrak's land, a name which does not occur again, with Damascus as its chief city; bordering upon it in the North-west Hamâth, which must have been actually conquered by the Assyrians shortly afterwards, Isa. x. 9, and Phœnicia, vv. 1-4; advancing further to the South-west it dashes to pieces the four small kingdoms of the Philistines, vv. 5-7, and the nearer it approaches the longer the description lingers at the small kingdoms, especially lest the causes of the righteous chastisement should be overlooked; besides, Phœnicia and Philistia were much better known than Damascus and Hamâth. Yet as early as ver. 1 the great general truth is introduced, which explains everything and recurs at the end of the strophe ver. 8 with the greatest significance, that Yahvé has *the eye*, or the survey, of men generally to see and judge their deeds, and especially of all the tribes of Israel, of both kingdoms (as is said with emphasis 'Amôs iii. 1, p. 167, sq.), save that what has to be said of the Northern kingdom is reserved for a later place. In Tyre (for by Phœnicia this city is specially intended) is censured (1) the over-wisdom, the persuasion of being wise and powerful whilst it lacks the divine wisdom; (2) the folly of thinking to protect themselves merely by external means, *e.g.* by strong towers and walls, a folly which then shewed new and remarkable vigour, and put forth its extremest endeavours;

(3) covetousness ; all of them reproaches which are very intelligible in the case of Tyre. But what folly ! That storm hurls Tyre's treasures rather into the sea, the Assyrian will take and destroy his strong fortress ! The Philistines already tremble at a distance at the sight of this approaching tempest, and behold their hope in Tyre and the permanence of their idolatry deceived ; in proud insolence towards the true God they now do homage to the most abominable superstition, *e. g.* devouring sacrifices of raw flesh dripping with blood (Hos. viii. 13 ; Ps. xvi. 4) : but only let their pride be sufficiently humbled, their kingdoms destroyed, their cities inhabited only by bastards and common people of that kind, then they will look to Ssion for the true deliverance, so that at last even this ancient enemy becomes a servant of Yahvé, his land becomes a portion of Yuda, and his cities, becoming exactly like those of Yuda, come over into the community, as in fact the Yebusites, *e.g.* were once brought by Davîd to the community, 2 Sam. ch. 5.—But around Ssion, ver. 8, Yahvé is then as it were encamped as a rampart, as a defence, that no one despotically or with evil intentions may advance and return here, march hither and thither, and come into the sanctuary, and no foreign tyrant again overrun those who assemble around this sanctuary, Isa. ix. 3. And a rapid conclusion is made for the present with a sentence which refers back to the commencement ver. 1, as if springing from the most intense feeling, that the present confusion of human affairs has risen too high for God to be able to endure it longer.

2. But the flow of the discourse is interrupted only for the purpose of expanding in the second strophe precisely the last thought with greater force and exclusiveness. And in exalted language the great thought of the Messiah is brought forward, ver. 9, sq. Tremble not like the Philistine cities, ver. 5, but rejoice thou Ssion, the Meſſiah certainly is coming to thee ! In the Messiah the two characteristics which are generally considered incompatible exist in complete harmony : on the

one, the divine, side, the power both of right and of deed, by which he is always just and never *without help* in need, therefore, is always victorious; on the other, the human, side, goodness and gentleness; and he has both together in the fullest measures. Therefore the successes are in his case the greatest conceivable and the most lasting: himself gentle and, as it was in the first age of the community (see *Hist. of Israel*, ii. 130, sq. 242; (ii. 187; 340, sq.; v. 428)), riding upon the ass's foal, he destroys the most powerful and defiant military armaments, chariot and horse of the Heathen (comp. x. 5 and on Hos. xiv. 4); although powerful in war, if it must be, comp. vv. 13-16, he yet ultimately purposes and desires only peace as the law of nations, and becomes externally the restorer of the full extent of the ancient Davidic kingdom, comp. on Ps. lxxii. 8, and above on 'Amôs viii. 12.—But if, again, the ancient history is calmly reviewed v. 11, sq., and the eternal vocation of the community, which is expressed therein, be considered, similar hopes are arrived at: even *by means of*, or by virtue of, *the blood of thy covenant*, i.e. of the covenant once founded under blood, of the difficult beginning and indestructibly holy foundation of the community, Ex. ch. xxiv., Yahvé releases the prisoners out of the waterless pit, i.e. out of prison, Gen. xxxvii. 24; so many of the nation have not been scattered for ever, a higher hope prevails here; *O return from that pit to the dry-place*, where you are dry, *ye prisoners of hope*, i.e. ye not hopelessly banished ones! to-day, too, notwithstanding all threatening circumstances, *it runneth*, as according to a well-known earlier Oracle, "double I repay thee" the sufferings patiently borne, Isa. xl. 1, sq., so that the future glory, the Messianic, is twice as great as all the past.—For vv. 13-16 it is precisely the nature of this covenant, that this community can never feel that it is alone and without Yahvé, he arms and inspires and strengthens it, constitutes it as it were his weapon, his offensive weapon, too, when it must be, (Yuda his bow, Ephraim the arrow, O how beautifully united are both! and

then as the third Ssion itself as the primary weapon, the royal sword), and gives it courage for war against such as retain the Banished ones too long and unjustly, *e.g.* the Ionians (acc. Joel iv. 6, 7; Num. xxiv. 24), ver. 13: and then, when the battle is at hand, the same Yahvé in another aspect, ver. 14, sq., hovers over them again in the tempest recognizable to them as the God fighting for them, whilst that arrow just mentioned ver. 13, goes forth like the lightning itself—or as the rolling thunder—God giving them the signal by his thunder-trumpet, protecting them by his bright presence, so that they devour their enemies in the battle, treading down the sling-stones hurled against them as powerless weapons which have missed their mark, and drink their blood as if they were intoxicating themselves with full draughts, and are sprinkled by it as only the sacrificial bowls or the altar-corners are sprinkled,—this battle being as it were a sacred sacrificial struggle! Such forcible imagery is more excusable in an age which was still exceedingly warlike and sanguinary, and recurs with little change, Isa. xxx. 27-30, Hab. iii. 9-11.—Thus then, ver. 16, he succours them as only a watchful shepherd protects his sheep (a figure with which this prophet is very conversant, x. 2, sq.; xi. 4, sq.): for they of this kingdom have been called to high regal honours, the precious stones of diadems will glitter upon Yahvé's soil, one of which any one may pick up, since the Messiah is only like the *primus inter pares*: with which picture of the regal dignity of Israel this Messianic strophe fitly closes, comp. x. 4; Isa. xxxii. 1; Mic. v. 4.

3. The profoundest proof of this is the nature of Yahvé himself, his goodness and beauty, which is as evident as boundless, which is hourly felt in his community by those who prosper, and because it is inexhaustible may be continually called forth by prayer and supplication, if men only respond to it, ix. 17, sq. For it is certain, x. 2, that false gods, prophets, and religions (*e.g.* dreams, *incubationes*, Isa. lxv. 4) cannot succour or comfort: a proof has just been given in history, inasmuch as



the numerous Israelites of both kingdoms, especially of the Northern, can be dragged away into exile in such numbers only for the reason that the nation did not confide in the true God and shepherd, thus becoming like a shepherdless miserable flock which is a prey to any caprice and any calamity.—There are, indeed, as the discourse proceeds, ver. 8, with a sudden corrective tone, shepherds and leaders (*goats*) of this flock, the nation, namely, the princes and other mighty men: but they cannot and may not have Yahvé's permission to continue, a judgment awaits them, which is described, ch. xi.; for at length the time is come when Yahvé, acc. ix. 1, 8, will again turn his succouring gaze upon Yuda, with the destruction of the evil shepherds, will bring therefore the Messiah, and once more make Yuda that inexhaustible source of good shepherds, stays and leaders, of the people, as was said, ver. 9, 16 (Isa. xix. 13; xxii. 25, comp. as to the meaning, Mic. v. 4), proud again like his war-horse, so that in the war with the Heathen with their horses (acc. ix. 9, sq.) she will trample these like dust beneath her feet, vv. 3-5, as was described more fully above, ix. 13-16. Thus, then, as their gracious answering God, he strengthens both halves of Israel and restores them in every respect, as if no anger or correction had ever existed, ver. 6; the close recurs to the opening of this strophe, the words here and xiii. 9, being partially a re-echo of Hos. ii. 23-25.

4. Particularly will Ephráim, at present so deeply depressed, then become again more courageous and joyous, ver. 7. Whatever the future unfolding of the divine will may bring to this kingdom in the immediate future, should he wholly scatter the Ephráimites as they are already partly scattered (comp. xiii. 7, sq.), yet in captivity they will remember the divine love, whose work they even then experience, and at an easy signal from his mouth (Isa. vii. 18) return home redeemed, and then grow as they grow, *i.e.* grow wholly undisturbed, once more taking possession of the waste districts, acc. Isa. viii. 23, and the like passages, and further increasing so that it *does not suffice for*

them, they have scarcely room enough, vv. 8-10. Then is repeated upon a larger scale the deliverance by the Red Sea: again he marches through the sea of straitness, the deep, strait, and alarming Egyptian Sea, to deliver the banished, and with a mighty blow smites the sea, which is all in commotion with its waves, that he may still it (representing Egypt), so that immediately the depths of the river are at the same time dried (representing Euphrates and Assyria); that thus, after the pride of the two great hostile powers has been subdued, and their heavy sceptre broken, the passage may be open for the redeemed in the South and the North (Isa. xi. 15, sq.), whereupon their prosperity then follows without end, ver. 11, sq.

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On the opening of the oracle, comp. above, p. 79, sq. That *Chadrak* was at that time a god or demigod, who was commonly worshipped in the land of which Damascus was the capital, might be conjectured from the context alone. The name, however, has been preserved, without much doubt, in the compound *אֲדִרְמֶלֶךְ*, the name, acc. 2 Kings xvii. 31, of a god whose temporary importance may be gathered from the fact that a son of Sanherib was called after him, 2 Kings xix. 37; but there is great probability, according to what I observed in the *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1856, p. 665 (comp. 1852, p. 596), that he was also worshipped in Mabûg. And when it is borne in mind that primitive names of this kind may be retained to the latest times as the names of tribes and men (see examples *Hist. of Israel*, i. p. 382 (i. p. 548, sq.)), even the name *khazraj* of an Arabian tribe, which was scattered widely at an early period, may date back to it.

ix. 3. *Tyre* built itself *towers*, an attempt to represent the paronomasia *צִוְרִי מְצִוְרִי*. But that Sidon, ix. 2, is named with Tyre in order that both may denote together all Phœnicia, appears clear from the whole connexion. We may therefore say that the prophet enumerates, after the example of 'Amôs, ch. i. sq.,

seven nations, added to which Israel will form the eighth : yet there is not that emphasis laid upon this round number here which there is in the book of 'Amôs. That Gath should be wanting amongst the Philistine cities, and only *Bastards* dwell in Ashdôd (comp. *Alterth.* p. 315, sq. (272) ), agrees, acc. to *Hist. of Israel*, iv. p. 143 (iii. 629), with the times to which this prophecy belongs. At a time when 'Uzzia had destroyed Gath and Yabne, and placed Jewish garrisons in Ashdôd, it could be expected of no foreign land so readily as of the land of the Philistines that it would become Jewish, although it had since then shown signs of again becoming more rebellious.—The construction of הָרָה, ix. 5, and the similar constructions, x. 8, 9, must be taken acc. § 357 b.

Since acc. § 160 d מְצָחָה is not a simple form, it might be conjectured that the Massôra had in their minds the meaning, *so that there is no host* (מְצָחָה which many MSS. read, in fact) : but that gives no true sense in this member, and only apparently suits the following. We should rather be inclined to amend it to מְצָחָה, understanding this word in the same sense as מְצָחָה, Isa. xxix. 3, which will be explained *l. l.* ; the feminine ending cannot eventually affect this sense. In general the meaning and figure are the same as Isa. xxix. 3 (although the application is quite different).

The Arab. word *mansur* corresponds exactly to מְצָחָה, ix. 9, comp. 2 Sam. xix. 3 ; 2 Kings v. 1, after the ancient poetic words, Ps. xviii. 51 ; 1 Sam. ii. 1 : he who always finds help at the right moment, even in the commotion of the hardest struggle, is the victorious hero, not he who in mere barbarity falls upon others and slays them.

The *also* of ix. 11, as of Joel iv. 4, indicates consideration, reflection coming to the more distant reason ; in passages like this we may substitute for it our *even* (Germ. *schon*), the sense being, the thing is thus if we only take this into consideration. The reason for affixing the word *thou* at once to this הָאֵל, is because suddenly the great thought *on account of thy covenant-*

*blood* thrusts itself forward, with which it has no close connexion, since it is intended to refer only to the reason and not to an accessory idea of the sentence, however important it may be: accordingly only the subject is immediately appended to the *also*.—That בִּצְרוֹן, ver. 12, means *dryness*, appears from what I have said on Ps. x. 1, and cannot be disputed. How it comes that מַגִּיד has the force of the indefinite phrase, *it is announced*, or our *it runs*, appears from § 200: as with λέγει, *kūla* manifestly an earlier and notable oracle is referred to, although the passage is not that which is now found in Isa. xl. 1, sq.

Departing from the accents, the two first members of ix. 13 may be more closely connected, and הִנֵּה brought into the first: in any case the meaning of the whole description is plain, and of its kind cannot be more beautiful. If bow and sword are the two principal weapons of attack, nothing can be more fitting than that this hero intends to make Yuda his bow, Ephraim the arrows to be shot therefrom, and Sion as his sword; the ancient Davidic lyric, Ps. lx. 6, had already used similar imagery, but with greater primitive simplicity. That the arrow indicated, ver. 13, should appear more prominently, ver. 14, is what we might expect. But another figure of a similar warlike character occurs in the course of this discourse, x. 3.—*The storms from the south*, ver. 14, are dreaded especially in Yuda, as coming from the wide desert in the south: it is as if another storm drove up from Sinai, Hab. iii. 3, sq.

It is certain from the whole sense and course of the discourse that a new strophe begins with the words, ix. 17, and nothing can be more certain than that the words, ix. 17, are inseparably connected with those immediately following, x. 1. It cannot therefore be denied that God is here called not only *good* but that the related adjective *beautiful* is applied to him: and although by accident this does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament, it is not necessary to compare the *hundred most beautiful names* of the Moslems, for the early Christian language supplies the analogy (comp. Lagarde's anal. syr. p. 49, 7).

—The fact is, we must familiarise ourselves with the peculiar language of this prophet: equally unusual is the paronomasia, which occurs immediately, x. 3, upon the word *visit*, which makes the rapid change of the persons possible; and also the comparison of the favourite charger of a king in battle. This image, however, may be also explained by that of Cant. i. 9.

On וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹתֵימָם, x. 6, comp. § 196 *b*: its meaning is clearly the same as that of וְהִשִּׁיבָהּ, ver. 10, and probably it is best simply to restore this reading, since the present form may have arisen from a confusion with the word וְהוֹשִׁיבָתִים, Hos. xi. 11.—That the strophe closes with ver. 6, may be seen also from the fact that the two foregoing strophes, ix. 8, 16, came to a close with a similar *for*, and the piece, xiii. 9, closes similarly as regards the thought. In the piece before us the following strophe ends, x. 12, with the formula נָאִם יְהוָה, which is as seldom used by our prophet as by Hoséa, and is repeated by him in like manner, except xi. 6, only in the closing thought of the following piece, xiii. 7, sq.

The words *they grow as they grow*, x. 8, describe with graphic brevity undisturbed growth, and the second *perf.* רָבִי is explained from § 360 *b*.—יָמִצָּא לָהֶם, ver. 10, stands here in its primary local signification: *it reaches to them*, and the *Nif.*, as often, expresses simply that the action is self-contained; comp. on Ps. xxxii. 6.

A tolerable sense cannot be found in the first two members of x. 11, until we determine to read both times בָּיָם instead of בָּיִם; the construction הִכָּה בָּרַי to smite into the sea as with a mighty scourge is then exactly like ix. 4 in our prophet; and that *the sea of waves* is not the calm but the tempestuous sea (κυματώδης) follows as a matter of course. The following member then describes the effect of this divine blow into the sea.—The single difficulty which could be raised would be, that in the final strophe, vv. 7-12, the nation is spoken of only in the plural, whilst here the singular עָבַר is used of it. But an exactly similar change of number is very possible anywhere,

and occurs in our prophet also, x. 3-5 ; xiii. 9. For *from him*, x. 4, incontestably refers to Yuda, not to God: this lies as much in the whole connexion of the words and thoughts, x. 3-5, as on the contrary it would have no meaning to lay emphasis on the fact that every brave man is from God.

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2. *The dark side of the Future*, CH. XI. ; XIII. 7-9.

But before this Messianic prosperity can come, what is evil in Israel must be destroyed, the unrighteous government broken up ; particularly the whole Northern kingdom with its incorrigible princes and mighty men must first fall by the same storm which strikes the Heathen kingdoms, the inroads of the Assyrians, because it is beyond salvation. This is the other, the mournful side of this whole prophecy ; and thus that which, x. 3, was briefly indicated, is again resumed and purposely treated at greater length ; only that here by the shepherds whom Yahvé cannot tolerate are especially meant those of the Northern kingdom, as appears from the subsequent description.

But it is, again, a terrible thought that this whole kingdom, which is still a kingdom of Yahve's, must be destroyed. How can that be proved ? Is this the only thing possible ? is there no other healing and saving resource than complete destruction ? Yahvé, as is fully explained, ix. 17, sq., is the gracious, ever succouring God : why then does he thus suspend this final punishment over his people Israel ?

The answer to this lies in the history of the kingdom during about the last twenty years. During this period it had not only passed through the greatest changes, so that its character and future might be sufficiently well perceived, but, what is of greater importance, the prophet had himself during this time devoted his whole love, care, and exertions to this unfortunate

kingdom, if by any means it might be saved; he had thus experienced in himself in the most intimate manner the changes and fortunes of the kingdom, and carried the kingdom, with all its sufferings and hopes, deeds and evils, good or bad prospects, in his own pure heart. At a time when the kingdom was extremely unfortunate on account of internal commotions (during the end of the house of Yehû) he had desired, possessed by the divine impulse of prophetic compassion, to render it assistance; he had desired to restore in it the gentle rule of the true religion of Yahvé; he a Judean had desired to maintain harmony between the two kingdoms as the basis of the welfare of each: these had been the two great principles and determining motives with which he as a prophet of this kingdom had desired to work and actually did work. And assuredly this wholly new attempt to restore the prosperity of the kingdom was neither without foundation nor without fruit: a true prophet, although he fights with entirely different weapons from those of worldly rulers, exerts a marvellous power, and by his bare word may become the most successful leader of a great nation; and thus by the appearance of this prophet there came a bright moment into the darkness; for a short time it seemed as if everything would change for the better. But this hope passed away only too soon, the citizens of the kingdom were too weak and indifferent to follow him with sincerity and constancy: thus whilst he was obliged to turn away from them more and more, as though thereby their good spirit departed from them, one calamity after the other befell them, the last means of deliverance was used without lasting result, henceforth no true, *i.e.* divine and prophetic help seemed possible any more, and actual overthrow as the consequence of internal and external disruption was the only thing that promised the commencement of a better state of things.

When the prophet surveys at one glance these twenty years of his work, although it had been increasingly fruitless, as well as his whole relation towards the kingdom, the survey takes

the form of a great connected picture. It seems to him that Yahvé called him at that time to be the shepherd of these sheep which were already in such an unhappy condition, to see whether they might yet be saved, and that he had really courageously, as in Yahvé's name and strength, taken upon himself the office, although the condition of the flock was not encouraging, and with this feeling, as Yahvé's representative, had laid hold of two shepherd's staves (sceptres), the staff *grace* and the staff *concord* or peace, those two divine powers which alone constitute true government and are alone able to save a prostrate kingdom. Thus he represents the character, the purposes and methods of the divine guidance; the divine shepherd must possess not merely wonderful power, but also the highest faithfulness, meekness, and self-sacrifice! But what fortunes he experienced as this shepherd, how he was soon compelled to break the one staff after the other in displeasure with the ungovernable and ungrateful flock, so that with the withdrawal of these divine remedies pure calamity befell the flock which had rejected deliverance, and how at length, instead of the gentle staff of Yahvé, he could only take up the staff of a tyrant and therewith the symbol of the present condition of the kingdom of Samaria which had arisen therefrom,—this he narrates in a narrative which holds a place midway between a figurative and literal record, and is a graphic history of those times in a few grand lines. His narrative establishes the principle, that the gentle divine guidance and goodness can be of no further assistance, and that the divine sword of vengeance must now come to establish a better state of things upon the ruins of this incorrigible kingdom. This narrative, which wears at first sight a somewhat strange appearance, because figure and fact are constantly blended, in reality, when accurately inspected, supplies the best possible picture of the inconsolable and irremediable condition of the Northern kingdom; and although many particulars that are here narrated flow purely from the image of the shepherd,



and it would *e. g.* be beside the mark to ask whether the prophet did actually demand and receive a wage of 30 shillings from Samaria, acc. xi. 12, still this remains certain, that the prophet describes generally the impressions which the state of the kingdom made upon him during about the last twenty years. And as generally he resembles Hoséa in many particulars, so this fresco painting of his has greater similarity with Hoséa, ch. i.-iii. than with any other prophetic piece.

The exposition of the inner necessity of the destruction of the kingdom, and especially of the fall of its magnates, takes up the largest space in this narrative, xi. 4-16; but this piece is opened, xi. 1-3, with that tempest which was referred to above, ix. 1, the destruction itself, as the goal of this discourse, until the conclusion, after the necessity of the destruction has been shown in a lengthy narrative, recurs to it again with higher power and clearness, and a Messianic word is yet added to form a link of connexion, xi. 17; xiii. 7-9, at the close with the first half, ch. ix.-x.

# 11.

1 Open Libanon thy doors, | that fire may feed on  
thy cedars! || wail cypress that the cedars have  
fallen, how the splendid ones have been laid waste! |  
wail ye Bashan's oaks, that the untrodden forest  
hath come down! || Hark the wailing of the shep-  
herds, that their splendour is laid waste! | hark the  
roaring of the lions, that Yordan's pride is laid  
waste! ||

1. Thus said Yahvé my God: | “feed the sheep  
5 of the slaughter, || whose owners slaughter and do  
not suffer, whose seller saith “blessed be Yahvé  
that I get rich!” | and whose shepherd spareth

them not!" || For I will not any more spare the land's inhabitants, saith Yahvé, | but I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand and into his king's hand, who will break in pieces the land without my rescuing from their hand! ||—Then fed I the sheep of the slaughter, verily the most suffering sheep; | and took me two staves, the one I called *Graciousness* the other *Concord*, | and fed the sheep. ||

2. So I destroyed the three shepherds in one moon: | yet my soul grew impatient of them, and theirs also tired of me; || so that I said "I will not feed you! | the dying may die, and that to be destroyed may be destroyed, and the rest may devour the one the flesh of the other!" || and I took my staff *Graciousness* and broke it up, |—  
 10 in order to break my covenant which I had concluded with all the nations; || it was broken on that day, | and therefore the most suffering sheep which gave heed to me perceived that it was Yahvé's word. ||

3. So I said to them: "if it pleaseth you give my hire, if not let it be!" | and they weighed as my hire thirty silverlings! || Then said Yahvé to me: "cast it into the Treasury, the splendid price at which I am priced by them!" | so I took the thirty silverlings and cast them in the house of God into the treasury, || and broke up

my second staff *Concord*,—in order to break the brotherhood between Yuda and Israel. ||

15        4. Then said Yahve unto me: “Further take thee the tools of a foolish shepherd!” || for behold I appoint a Shepherd in the land who heedeth not the drooping, seeketh not the straying and healeth not the wounded, | who tendeth not the lean, and eateth the flesh of the fat, and rendeth their hoofs. ||

O my worthless shepherd who betrayeth the sheep, on whose arm and right eye a sword!|—his arm—it will dry up, and his right eye—it will  
13. be put out! || sword, awake against my shepherd  
7 and my relative (*meinen herrn neffen*)! saith Yahvé of Hosts, | smite the shepherd that the sheep may be scattered: then I turn my hand upon the weak. || And in the whole land, saith Yahvé, two parts thereof will be destroyed [and] die, | and the third part be left therein: || so I bring the third part into the fire, and smelt them as silver is smelted, and refine them as gold is refined: | he will call upon my name and I hear him, I say “my people is he,” and he will say “my God!” ||

1. That tempest, ix. 1, shall descend upon the fair sacred territories of Israel, *e.g.* Libanon, Basan, and the pastures of Yordan, smiting exactly those most who stand the highest and are the most magnificent (the lords of the people); therefore cedars and other trees of that kind shall be struck down by

the storm (comp. this as further expanded Isa. ii. 12-16, almost at the same time), and indeed in turn throughout the whole land, so that the one kind and district of such trees can lament over the other,—those which are not yet thrown down, whose turn will soon come, over those which have already fallen; neither is such a sacred untrodden forest as, *e.g.*, that of the high Libanon, Isa. xxxvii. 24, any longer secure, ver. 1, sq.: the shepherds and lions, frightened out of their repose, may therefore wail over the desolation of their beautiful land, but in vain! ver. 3. Thus the discourse has already come with rapid strides to the shepherds, with whom, after this slighter prelude, it stays in a much more serious tone.—The passage was in the mind of Yéremyá, xxv. 34-36.

2. The narrative falls into four members.

(1) vv. 4-6. The original Divine commission. The prophet must feed the sheep which are as good as devoted to the slaughter, whose present owners and shepherds seem to find their profit and pleasure in destroying them in the quickest way possible, each one in his own way, ver. 4, sq. And that he may observe to what this points, an indication of the right interpretation is given to him at the commencement, ver. 6: alas, these sheep are the inhabitants of the land, and their present unhappy condition is not accidental but the result of previous sins, brought about therefore by the punishment of Yahvé himself; it is the condition of the Northern kingdom after the death of Yarob'am II., when, in consequence of earlier grievous transgressions and perversities, general disorder and endless civil war broke out, and every weaker person had to succumb to whoever was stronger at the moment; comp. Hoséa ch. iii.-xiv. and the same condition, Isa. xix. 2-4. These sheep, therefore, the prophet has to feed, if by some means he may yet deliver them from visible ruin: the commission and power for it is given him by Him who not only punishes but much more willingly redeems and makes alive again; as if he who at the present must punish and cannot

avert the great calamity, nevertheless would indicate at the same time a new resource and a new power by means of which deliverance may come.—And immediately, ver. 7, follows the readiness of the prophet to accept the commission, and to do all that is necessary on his part to carry out the divine will. That it was not an easy thing to feed such sheep of the slaughter, which were described above as *therefore the most miserable sheep*, was to be anticipated: yet he accepted the office without demur, and his conduct at the very first shows how well he knew how to fill it according to the divine intention: the staff of government he may handle as it pleases him, for divine authority and executive power has been given to him, but he accepts only the twin staff of those two powers by which alone a really divine rule can be carried on and a disorganized kingdom reformed: the staff of *Graciousness*, which must bring everywhere the effect of divine favour and gentleness to anticipate any good endeavour, to heal any hurt, to destroy nothing, and to guard the whole flock, which is the first and most important staff; and the staff *Concord*, which together with that graciousness procures with a strong hand peace, internal concord. As in this sense of the two supreme powers, which are here made to rule, an innumerable number of particular blessings are included, subsequently in their particularisation their design is confined to special applications which were just at that time pressing, vv. 10, 14.

(2) And not in vain were the authority and care of this shepherd of a quite new description, ver. 8: as a proof of the success of his exertions the remarkable instance is adduced, that the (well-known) three bad shepherds, of the class described vv. 4-6, were destroyed in one month as one of the results. This must refer to three kings, or tyrants, of the Northern kingdom who had fallen in a month, in whose fall was seen an effect of the renovated prophetic office and of divine justice. Unfortunately no detailed account of the history of this time is preserved: yet we must clearly suppose that the king Zakharya,

son of Yarob'am II., his murderer Shallum, who is said to have ruled only a month, and some third ruler, raised to the throne at the same time and quickly dethroned again, who probably belonged to the other side of Yordan, and whose name has been preserved at least in a detached manner, 2 Kings xv. 10-15, are intended; comp. *Hist. of Israel*, iv. p. 154 (iii. p. 644).—But although such results and such a commencement of a vigorous rule of righteousness ought to have made the flock more compliant and docile, it was all in vain that improvement had been expected from them, no confidence and no good understanding were established between sheep and shepherd; even the best shepherd's patience gets exhausted, and this shepherd discovered that soon enough. True, the good shepherd is loth to give up the office entrusted to him, and does not at once wholly withdraw in displeasure: so this shepherd too withdrew only gradually,—the good spirit, which made the last attempt to save them, retreated farther from them only step by step, as if to allow the unhappy flock to note what it was they were about to forfeit; and at every step which he drew back, there came also at the same time (as it now seems to the prophet in his survey) an actual correction, a great national calamity; but in vain, they trifled away every stage of reflection and return, until at last the entire work of the prophet was trifled away. At first he merely threatens to leave them, ver. 9, breaking the first of the two staves, so that with the rejection of the divine graciousness the way into the Holy Land is opened to the Heathen (the Assyrians after Menahem, 2 Kings xv. 19, and other Heathen in their train, Isa. ix. 10, sq.), as if the covenant had also been broken which Yahvé had made with them, not to desecrate his holy land, Hos. ii. 20; this very sensible punishment did in reality bring the flock, at all events those amongst them who gave some heed to the prophet, to see that this prophet had not been trifling with his threats, ver. 9, but had spoken the veritable word of Yahvé, ver. 11: but nevertheless

(3) this new bright moment did not last, the flock did not reform; when he makes more serious preparations for withdrawing, and therefore reminds them of his hire without actually demanding it, they give him really a wage, and further a very miserable one, as if in ridicule and only for the purpose of getting rid of him legally under the appearance of justice (as when a hired day labourer is paid for a temporary piece of work, or as one would estimate the price of a common slave, Ex. xxi 32, therefore ironically *the magnificent hire!*), but thereby only really show that they do not desire the guidance of the good shepherd and his truth.

Accordingly the next thing he feels compelled by higher influence to do is, that he meets in the right way the coarse feeling which had recognised in him only a common labourer for hire, who might be paid his hire and sent away, by refusing to accept this contemptible wage for himself, casting it as an alms into the Temple Treasury, ver. 13. And since they have also suffered all this to take place, he is entirely free of them, and must leave them to themselves: accordingly he breaks the second staff also, that the internal peace between the two kingdoms may cease (which actually took place under Pékach), ver. 14.

(4) But if the good shepherd is thus trifled away, the evil one must come, namely, Pékach, the cruel, wild king, who was then reigning; and thus he who before wielded the gentle staff of Yahvé must now on the contrary take the implements of a foolish shepherd, to symbolize who it is that now reigns over Samaria, and reigns, according to Yahvé's will, to punish, ver. 15, sq.

3. Yet the divine righteousness cannot rest in this condition of things: the narrative is ended, the higher voice of pure presentiment of the future again returns, to complete in a few grand plain words what had been said, ver. 1-3, after the proof from history has been supplied. O my bad shepherd, exclaims the divine voice, on whose arm and right eye, *i.e.* on whose

right side, instead of the staff or shepherd's implements, ver. 15, just because he is the bad shepherd, there projects a sharp sword always drawn, which only slays not feeds—he (Péqach) cannot continue with such an infamous arm and right eye; on the contrary, thou divine sword of vengeance (Job xix. 29; Isa. xxvii. 1), arise *against my shepherd and relation (herrn neffen)* (for every king indeed stands nearer to Yahvé, is more than any subject his son, or, at least, his nephew)! smite the shepherd that the flock also may be scattered (by the Assyrians and the exile)! Not till then can Yahvé turn his hand again graciously over the weak, the downcast and reformed in the exile. Not before this testing has been most severe, when only a third of the nation is left and this third has been purified again, can and will arise a reformed community answering to the mind and will of Yahvé, Isa. vi. 13; i. 25.

It appears quite superfluous to say more as to the true meaning of the much misunderstood words, xi. 1-3. Comp. the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, iv. p. 49.—The conjunction וְאִשָּׁר is not a mere variation from כִּי, but has at the same time a special and stronger meaning, acc. § 333 *a*.

xi. 5, *and not suffer for it, i.e. go unpunished*.—On וְאִשָּׁר ver. 5 comp. § 235 *b*: the man says, *good luck, that I may become rich!* For this I sell them, letting men go like cattle in the hope of becoming really rich by the sale, for which I thank God! I am satisfied, thank God, that I can sell them with such a prospect before me!

xi. 7, the use of לָכֵן is unusual: this particle which the prophets elsewhere so frequently use when they wish to draw an inference with the force of a divine threat from severe words already spoken, this prophet here places in the middle of the sentence, and thus departs very remarkably from the usual language of the prophets; neither does he use it anywhere else. The particle here also serves to recapitulate something weighty which had already been uttered: but as the emphatic *therefore*



elsewhere announces at the same time something new as its inference, there lies here in the idea of עֲנִיִּים something new, comp. ver. 11; they are the well-known unhappiest *sufferers* who are here intended. We may therefore render this *therefore*, which is here used in such an unusual manner, by *verily, yes indeed* (*ja wirklich*).

How it comes that חֲבָלִים, xi. 7, 14, can mean *concord*, is explained § 179 *a*: properly speaking, it would mean *agreeing* people, etymologically *confederated* people, since חָבַל may both denote *he who keeps a bond*, i.e. a condition or a mutual agreement, and also, like שָׁלֵם, *he who keeps peace*, Ps. vii. 7; such participles of an active force belong always to the most recent formations.

xi. 13. On הַיּוֹצֵר (as it must be vocalized) see § 45 *d*; on הַיֹּדֵר § 293 *c*; and on מַעַל § 219 *a*.—Ver. 16, נֹצֵבָה, is the lean, sick, from Arab. *nadhāba* = *nadhā*, Ham. p. 182, 8, from below, and נֹצָה, Jer. iv. 7; also Arab. *nāṣīb* is *fainting, drooping*, Hariri, p. 7, 1 Sac.; comp. the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* iv. p. 41, sq. *He rends their hoofs* by driving them upon bad paths.

xiii. 8, the first בָּהּ of it must be closely connected with the numerical idea, as the LXX. correctly render it by αὐτῆς; the word may then refer to צֹאן as *the flock*, the word not requiring necessarily to be used as a plural. It would be just possible to suppose that the foregoing בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ should be so understood and construed: but the flock and the people are never in the whole piece placed quite on a level with the land. The land is resumed in the last בָּהּ in its complete sense.

## CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

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Page 10, note, add *Arab.* before *nām*.

„ 13, note, add (97).

„ 20, note, add (256, 297, 338).

„ 128, line 20, add *Arab.* before *mā*, etc.

„ 181, line 5, read *radiateth* instead of *rayeth*.

„ 191, line 26, add *Arab.* before *sikkah*.

„ 230, line 32, read *Yuda* instead of *Juda*.

„ 305, line 2, read 2 instead of *II*.

„ 305, line 3, read *An anonymous Prophet*.

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